

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



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*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.*

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# Iowa Christmas Bird Count, 2005–2006

*Chris Caster*

The 2005–2006 Iowa Christmas Bird Count (CBC) included 50 locations, which is a new record high. See Table 1. Three counts returned — the Union and Carroll County counts after a one-year absence and Worth County after a two-year absence. The Neal Smith NWR count, although conducted, was not included for the second straight year, because it was again held after the CBC period end-date as set by the National Audubon Society.

Weather played a large role in this season's count. Temperatures dipped well below freezing in early December. By 15 Dec, the date of our first count, open water had become scarce. Most of the waterfowl and gulls were pushed out of the state and despite a late December warming, they did not return during the count period. On a positive note, many of the counts reported significant snow cover, making open country birds easier to find and bringing more birds to feeders.

The total species count this season was 138, well above the average of 132. However, the total number of birds counted was 428,929, somewhat below the 10-year average of 479,970. Far and above the best count this season was Keokuk (91), which had the highest overall species total for the 6th straight year and tied its record count. Incidentally, the all time high CBC was 92 species, set by the Saylorville count on 16 Dec 1990. As usual, counts that found waterfowl generally fared the best. Other high counts this year included Davenport (77), Red Rock (73), Clinton (72), Saylorville and Rathbun (71). De Soto NWR (57) led the Missouri River counts. Decorah and Mason City (50) led the Northern Third. The average count this year had 13 people, 5.4 field parties, and found 53 species — exactly the same numbers as last year.

## REGULAR SPECIES

As a result of the cold and snow, this turned out to be a fantastic CBC by many measures. Whereas those species dependent on open water were pushed out, the snow pushed many birds to our roadsides and backyards. The species count was above average with very few notable misses. No fewer than 27 species were seen in record numbers this season and a number of others were at near record numbers. Overall waterfowl numbers were way down, but the species count was quite good. Gull numbers were also way down, but five species were recorded. Raptor numbers were exceptional. Open country birds were found in large numbers, as were most feeder birds. Frequently reported species are recorded in Table 2. Species found on three or fewer counts are shown in Table 3.

Waterfowl numbers were down substantially and in many instances numbers on a single count largely affected a species total. Greater White-fronted Geese (8) were found on just two counts with seven at Rathbun. Snow Geese (1,762) numbers were very low and nearly all were found on the Shenandoah count. A single Ross's Goose was reported at De Soto NWR. Eighteen counts reported Cackling Geese (214) and more than half of those were on the Van Buren County count. Canada Geese (79,152) posted their lowest totals in six years, but still above the 10-year average. No Mute Swans were reported this season. Trumpeter Swans (55) were reported in record numbers for the second year run-

ning with 13 birds on the Mason City count as the high. Tundra Swans (4) were reported from three counts.

Mallards (36,301) had the third lowest total in 10 years. All puddle ducks were found in numbers well below their 10-year averages. The largest Mallard counts were from Union County (4,195), West Mercer County (3,990), and Cedar Rapids (3,912). Wood Ducks (5) posted their lowest numbers in at least twenty years and just missed making the table of rare count species. Gadwalls (134) were mostly reported from Des Moines with 111 birds. American Black Ducks (80) were high on the Clinton count with 15. Northern Shovelers (94) were high in Wapello County with 57 birds. Northern Pintails (16), and Green-winged Teal (41) were also scarce. Thirty teal at Omaha was high.

Diving ducks were not numerous either. Most species totals were well below their 10-year averages. Only Greater Scaup (421) proved to be more numerous than usual with 419 reported on the Keokuk count alone, destroying the previous record of 259 birds during 2001–2002. They were nearly as numerous as Lesser Scaup (536), which was also high on the Keokuk count with 327 birds. Canvasbacks (1,859) were nearly all found on the Keokuk count as well. Redheads (74) were most numerous on the Westfield count with 50 birds. Ring-necked Ducks (99) were most numerous at Keokuk with 86 birds. Common Goldeneyes (7,341) were the most numerous of the diving ducks. Two sea duck species were found this year. A single Black Scoter was at Keokuk. Two Long-tailed Ducks were reported from Red Rock, one from Keokuk, and an additional count week bird was in Cedar Rapids. Buffleheads (16) were reported from just four counts. Common Mergansers (7,737) were below their 10-year average of 8,797, and 5,020 at Rathbun was high. Hooded Mergansers (85) were below average with 37 at Keokuk and 28 at Cedar Rapids. Red-breasted Mergansers (3) were really scarce. Ruddy Ducks (33) were far below the 10-year average of 720. Keokuk was high with 25 birds.

Apparently due to the snow cover, gallinaceous birds were plentiful this year. Gray Partridges (174) were reported from ten counts. High counts were Bremer County with 49, Spirit Lake with 39, and Ames with 32. This was the second highest total for the species in fifteen years. The Ring-necked Pheasant (3,151) count approached the record high of 3,475 birds. Always hard to find, two Ruffed Grouse on the SE Clayton County count were the only reported. Wild Turkey (2,892) reached a record high for the second year running. Missouri River turkey counts were most productive and the De Soto NWR count was again high with 371 birds. Northern Bobwhite (100) rebounded to nearly the 10-year average; however, this is now a far-cry from the 500+ birds seen on three consecutive counts beginning in 1987–1988. Clinton had the high with 29 birds.

Pied-billed Grebes (17) were found in average numbers with 10 at Keokuk. American White Pelicans (16) were also found in average numbers with 14 at Keokuk. Double-crested Cormorant (4) numbers were well below average with 3 at Davenport. Amazingly, Great Blue Herons (176) were present in near record numbers.

Bald Eagles (4,796) were found in record numbers crushing the previous high of 3,172. Mississippi River counts produced most of the birds with a high 629 at Davenport. Northern Harriers (55) again fell below their 10-year average of 79. Sharp-shinned (101) and Cooper's (102) Hawks produced new record highs and were widely distributed. A total of 23 accipiters reported on the Saylorville count were exceptional. No Northern Goshawks were reported for the first time in at least twenty years. Red-shouldered Hawks (14) established a new record and were reported on eight counts. Four on the Cedar Falls-



Waterloo count was high. Red-tailed Hawks (2,150) were reported in record high numbers and nearly double their 10-year average. Rough-legged Hawks (173) rebounded from last year's 10-year low to numbers well above average. Golden Eagles (8) were reported on six counts and the total equaled the record high set last year. American Kestrels (631) rose above their 10-year average of 593. Merlins (18) were reported from twelve counts and shattered the previous record high of 11 set just last year. Peregrine Falcons (4) were also reported in record numbers. A lone Prairie Falcon was on the Jamaica count.

American Coots (70) were found primarily on the Spirit Lake count with 51 birds. Killdeer (11) were at a 9-year low and Wilson's Snipes (26) were at an 8-year low. Gull numbers were abysmal. Ring-billed Gulls (2,271) recorded their third-lowest total in 20 years. Herring Gulls (1,602) fared relatively better, but still well below the 10-year average of 2,536 birds. Thayer's Gulls (4) were found in average numbers. A single Glaucous Gull was reported from Keokuk.

Rock Pigeons (12,079) posted their highest count since 1988–1989. Eurasian Collared-Doves (237) appear to be multiplying exponentially as they posted their fourth consecutive record high. Shenandoah with 51, Boone County with 32, and Cherokee with 30 were high counts. Mourning Doves (6,564) also established a new record high at nearly double the 10-year average. Eastern Screech-Owls (111) returned to above average numbers. Thirteen birds on the Saylorville count and ten on the Boone County count were exceptional. Great Horned Owls (241) also rebounded to above average numbers and their highest total in nine years. Barred Owls (164) established a new record high. Has the threat of West Nile passed? Long-eared Owls (48) were found somewhat above their average of 34. Short-eared Owls (7) were reported from just three counts with five on the Siam-Hopkins count. Northern Saw-whet Owls (4) were also in very short supply with Amana reporting two. Belted Kingfishers (116) were found in near-average numbers and were widely distributed.

Woodpeckers as a group were abundant. Red-headed Woodpeckers (267) rebounded to above average numbers after last season's five year low. Red-bellied Woodpeckers (2,124) established a new record high. Downy (2,929) and Hairy (658) Woodpeckers posted near record numbers. Pileated Woodpeckers (79) and Northern Flickers (785) were found in well above average numbers. Single Red-shafted Flickers were reported from Sioux City and De Soto NWR. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (30) tied the record high set two years ago.

It was a below average year for Northern Shrikes (17) and the birds were scattered all across the state. Loggerhead Shrikes (7) were reported from Southern Third counts in average numbers, although this average is not what it used to be. A high of 29 birds was set in 1993–1994 and until 1999–2000 double digit totals were the rule, but not since. Loggerhead Shrikes have averaged less than four birds total over the last eight counts. Blue Jay (5,133) numbers were well above their average of 3,822. American Crows (60,316) were somewhat below average. Horned Lark (3,593) numbers were slightly above average and only four counts did not report this species. Black-capped Chickadees (7,017) also posted numbers slightly above average. Tufted Titmouse (780) numbers were right at their 10-year average. Red-breasted Nuthatches (127) posted respectable numbers, but it was not an invasion year by any stretch. The White-breasted Nuthatch (3,250) total was a new record high. Brown Creepers (238) were widely distributed, but well

below their average of 287. A high of 36 birds were on the Andalusia count. Carolina Wrens (115) smashed their previous record high of 85 birds. Winter Wren (39) numbers were quite high, second only to the record count of 49 three years ago. Golden-Crowned Kinglets (87) numbers fluctuate quite a bit from year to year, but this total was somewhat below the 10-year average.

It was a good count season for the thrush family. Eastern Bluebirds (1,081) nearly doubled their previous record high of 560 set four years ago. The birds were widespread with Keokuk (94) and Dubuque (90) leading the way. Hermit Thrushes (21) were found in nearly record numbers. American Robins (1,556) counts fluctuate quite a bit and this year's numbers were below average. Union County was high with 425 birds.

Northern Mockingbirds (5) were at a near record high with Rathbun reporting two. Single Gray Catbirds were found on three counts. A single Brown Thrasher was reported from Cedar Rapids. European Starling (62,142) numbers neared an all-time high. Davenport, with a high count of 7,619 birds, is dubbed "Starling Capitol for a Year." Cedar Waxwings (4,499) were found in above average numbers. Yellow-rumped Warblers (45) were reported on eleven counts, also in above-average numbers.

Sparrows were generally seen in good numbers. Five Eastern Towhees and two Spotted Towhees were reported. American Tree Sparrow (10,914) numbers were somewhat below the 10-year average of 12,264. Single Field Sparrows were found at Davenport and Rathbun. Fox Sparrows (36) were reported in above-average numbers with a high of 12 at Andalusia. Song Sparrows (618) and Swamp Sparrows (90) were both found in slightly below-average numbers. Single Savannah Sparrows were found on the Princeton and Worth County counts. This rare CBC species has been reported in low numbers consistently for the last seven years. Two Lincoln's Sparrows were found at both Saylorville and Rathbun. White-throated Sparrows (451) were found in numbers well above average. Harris's Sparrows (164) rebounded somewhat from their two worst years in the last twenty, but this year's total was still below the 10-year average of 207. The high was 26 birds at Shenandoah. White-crowned Sparrows (126) established a new record high. Keokuk led with 34. Dark-eyed Juncos (24,415) and Lapland Longspurs (5,680) both established new record highs. Boone County reported an incredible 4,330 Lapland Longspurs and Keokuk added an impressive 615 to the effort. Snow Buntings (1,240) were also plentiful with their highest count in ten years. Northern Cardinals (8,295) also established a new record high.

Icterid numbers were mixed. Red-winged Blackbird (3,645) numbers were below their average of 4,546. Saylorville was high with 626 birds. Meadowlarks (340) were slightly above average. Bucking recent convention, three Mississippi River counts reported a total of 18 Eastern Meadowlarks based on plumage. Western Meadowlarks were also specified on the Princeton and Saylorville counts. Rusty Blackbird (42) numbers tend to fluctuate, but this count was well below the 10-year average of 113. Brewer's Blackbirds (6) were reported on three counts. Common Grackles (130) were again hard to find for the third straight year. Brown-headed Cowbirds (1,791) were found well above their average of 1,013 with 1,583 of those birds at Davenport.

It was mixed year for finches. Purple Finches (724) were found well above their average of 533. House Finches (5,025) established a new record high. Only a single Common Redpoll was reported from Ames. Pine Siskins (63) were relatively scarce. Only two years in the last twenty have produced fewer siskins. American Goldfinches (6,839), however,

posted the second best total of the last twenty years. There were no reports of crossbills, Evening or Pine Grosbeaks.

House Sparrows (26,209) were average. Sorry Davenport, but Shenandoah took the high on this one with 1,402 birds. Eurasian Tree Sparrows (763) established a new record high. Keokuk had 334 and West Mercer County had 237.

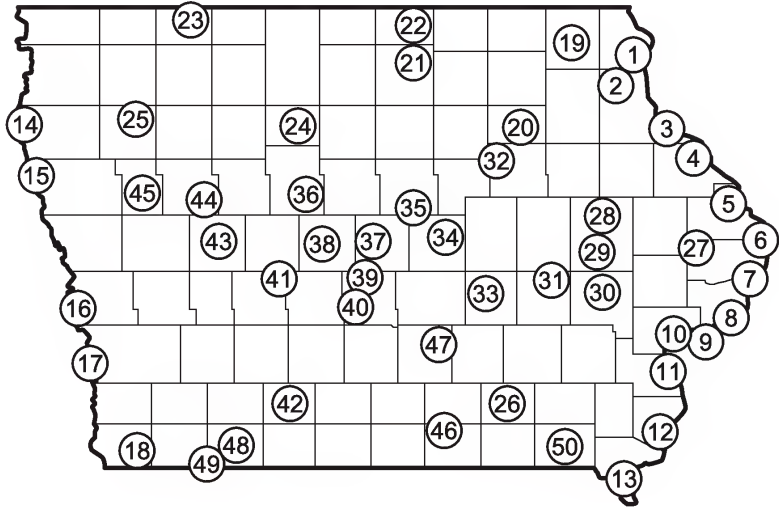


Figure 1. Locations of Iowa Christmas Bird Counts, 2005–2006.

#### NOTABLE MISSES

There weren't many notable misses this year with the exception of Northern Goshawk. This was the first year in at least the last twenty that this species was not reported. Mute Swan was not reported after appearing on three of the last five counts. Other missed birds included White-winged Scoter (6 of last 10), Red Crossbill (5 of last 10), Horned Grebe and White-winged Crossbill (both 4 of last 10).

#### UNCOMMON SPECIES

There were 38 species reported on three or less counts. A number of these were already discussed in the regular species accounts.

Unlike last year, there were no truly unusual birds, but there were a number of good birds reported. The best bird may have been a Turkey Vulture on the Boone County count. They have now been reported on eight of the last twenty CBCs, but they are certainly not a December Iowa bird. An American Pipit at Red Rock was nearly as good. Single birds have now been found on four of the last five CBCs, but you would need to go back to 1987–1988 to find another pipit.

There were a number of close thirds. A Sandhill Crane and a Snowy Owl at Union County, a Townsend's Solitaire at Taylor County, Varied Thrushes at Bremer County and Union-Eldora, a Bonaparte's Gull at Cedar Rapids, a Marsh Wren at Keokuk, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Muscatine, a Great-tailed Grackle at Des Moines, and a Common Loon at Saylorville were also great birds. Seven Black-billed Magpies were found on the Westfield count, which now makes it four of the last six years at Westfield. Lastly, a count week Black-crowned Night Heron was in Cedar Rapids.

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**Table 1. Site data for 2005–2006 Christmas Bird Counts**

Location	Date	Total Species	Total Birds	Obs	Field Pts	Hr	Miles Car	Ft	Owling Hr	Mi	Pt	Feeder Hr	Temp L	H	Snow Depth	Wind
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>																
1. Yellow River Forest	19-Dec	56	4291	6	5	35	292	12	2	25	1	1	-18	8	9	S 0-10
2. Northwest Clayton County	22-Dec	50	4481	6	3	32	266	4.5	2	26	2	2	8	41	12	SW 0-10
3. Southeast Clayton County	2-Jan	53	4584	12	7	46.25	424	10.5	2	25	1	6	35	39	0.5	NE 0-20
4. Dubuque	31-Jan	47	5945	15	7	38.5	284	16.5	0	0	1	1	33	35	0	W 10-13
5. Green Island	16-Dec	61	6830	10	6	39.2	317	8.5	2.75	36	0	0	14	19	5	W 0-20
6. Clinton	15-Dec	72	8340	9	4	31.25	274	32.5	5.75	63	0	0	24	31	7	SW 0-20
7. Princeton	20-Dec	63	7017	8	4	30.75	286	5	4	47	0	0	11	23	6	W 6-10
8. Davenport	18-Dec	77	23227	20	7	66.25	541	11.25	8	97	23	36	8	16	5	NW 10-15
9. Andalusia	4-Jan	68	10450	5	4	34.25	291	7.5	4.25	34	0	0	35	40	0	W 10-25
10. Muscatine	3-Jan	66	6892	11	4	38	334	12.5	4.25	41	8	12	35	40	0	SW 0-10
11. West Mercer County	28-Dec	67	13908	11	5	44	322	8.5	6	63	0	0	25	33	0	W 5-10
12. Burlington	17-Dec	68	5856	10	4	41	225	33	na	na	3	12	12	24	1.5	W 5-10
13. Keokuk	19-Dec	91	40315	10	8	57	362	12	0	0	0	0	6	23	0	var 5-10
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>																
14. Westfield	18-Dec	45	2957	18	7	96	325	3	1.5	40	2	6	-5	18	2	NW 5-15
15. Sioux City	17-Dec	53	9468	22	6	38.5	405	13.5	1.5	2	4	6	5	18	1.5	W 0-10
16. De Soto NWR	31-Dec	57	9896	16	7	51.5	375	14.25	1.5	22.5	1	0.5	31	39	0	SE 5-14
17. Omaha	17-Dec	54	12487	36	9	55.25	275	28	35	14	4	5	15	25	0	NW 0-5
18. Shenandoah	17-Dec	53	10672	13	6	43.5	389	21	2.5	33	48	200	16	23	0	N 0-12
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>																
19. Decorah	26-Dec	50	6707	11	5	37	360	11	1	10	4	5	31	35	7	SE 0-15
20. Bremer County	17-Dec	41	5591	8	4	29	453	5	0	0	0	0	8	11	12	NW 0-5
21. Mason City	17-Dec	50	13971	10	7	55	258	16	1	10	10	11	3	17	8	calm
22. Worth County	1-Dec	43	5065	5	3	28.5	188	15.5	0	0	0	0	31	34	6	E 10-15
23. Spirit Lake	17-Dec	45	7443	4	2	12	225	0.5	0	0	24	8	1	9	8	W 10-20
24. Humboldt County	26-Dec	28	641	6	2	7	150	0	0	0	0	0	34	37	4	na
25. Cherokee	18-Dec	38	2243	7	4	23	369	2	2	15	1	4	-2	9	5	W 5-12

**Table 1. Site data for 2005–2006 Christmas Bird Counts**

Location	Date	Total		Obs	Field		Miles		Owling		Feeder		Temp		Snow	Wind
		Species	Birds		Pts	Hr	Car	Ft	Hr	Mi	Pt	Hr	L	H		
MIDDLE THIRD																
26. Wapello County	2-Jan	53	7695	8	3	57	120	10	1	2	2	4	41	44	0	NW 12-18
27. Lost Nation	19-Dec	55	5405	16	5	37	350	6.5	2	30	1	2	-8	10	7	NW 0-10
28. North Linn	31-Dec	43	5174	7	4	29	351	4	3	29	1	4	32	35	0	NW 0-10
29. Cedar Rapids	17-Dec	62	12595	21	8	39	293	8	5	23	1	6	-1	12	6	na
30. Iowa City	18-Dec	62	9011	39	11	67.7	523	12.5	4.5	53	21	71.75	0	12	7	W 0-10
31. Amara	26-Dec	42	725	10	2	15	25	8	3	8	0	0	30	35	3	S 0-5
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	18-Dec	51	16633	5	5	33	479	9	0	0	2	6	-5	7	12	NW 0-10
33. Grinnell	17-Dec	30	1173	14	3	70	90	14	0	0	6	30	5	24	5	W 5-10
34. Marshalltown	22-Dec	37	2278	9	4	23.5	244.8	0	0	0	5	30	25	38	4	SW 10-15
35. Eldora-Union	21-Dec	39	1210	3	2	16	146.3	1.5	0.75	10.4	1	8	-2	19	5	light
36. Southeast Webster	31-Dec	45	3159	16	4	20	314	6	2	8	4	8	25	32	4	S 10
37. Ames	17-Dec	60	16689	41	21	90	355	50	3	42	4	13	8	17	5	N 4-10
38. Boone County	31-Dec	56	13226	38	18	118.75	648	50	4.75	25.5	12	45.5	29	34	0-3	NW 5-13
39. Saylorsville Reservoir	18-Dec	71	19449	25	10	88	645	49.5	4.25	46	0	0	9	17	3	WNW 0-5
40. Des Moines	16-Dec	67	29630	17	8	59	550	29	4	8	5	16	15	24	0	E 5-10
41. Jamaica	20-Dec	54	6726	6	3	31	308	8.5	1.75	31	0	0	31	36	0	NW 5-15
42. Union County	24-Dec	62	8705	4	2	17.5	267	2.5	0.5	16	0	0	34	41	0	NW 10-20
43. Carroll County	18-Dec	33	1793	4	2	7	55	0	0	0	1	1	0	10	6	calm
44. Sac County	17-Dec	32	1773	12	4	20	152	5	0	0	2	12	12	24	0-2	NW 0-12
45. Ida County	2-Jan	43	3326	17	5	120	192	23	1.5	2	5	20	29	34	0	N 10-15
SOUTHERN THIRD																
46. Rathbun Reservoir	17-Dec	71	12371	19	7	41	570	11	5	49	7	10	13	25	0	WNW 0-15
47. Red Rock Reservoir	17-Dec	73	8507	10	4	31.5	399	7	0.75	1.5		5.5	12	24	0	W 3-16
48. Taylor County	30-Dec	50	5668	8	4	27.3	185	9.12	0	0		24	36	45	0	WNW 0-20
49. Siam-Hopkins	23-Dec	36	2316	3	1	12	99	2.5	0	0	0	0	36	54	0	S 0-5
50. Van Buren County	29-Dec	36	4476	5	1	8	45	2	0	0	0	0	31	37	0	W 0-10
		138	428990													

**Table 2a. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2005–2006**

Location	Sn Go	Cack Go	Ca Go	Tr Sw	Wo Du	Ga	Am Wi	Am Bl Du	Ma	No Sh	No Pi
MISSISSIPPI RIVER											
1. Yellow River Forest			21		1			13	547		
2. Northwest Clayton County			1								
3. Southeast Clayton County			2								
4. Dubuque			611	7				2	259		
5. Green Island			128						15		
6. Clinton			67	4		2		15	597	2	1
7. Princeton			530	8				2	63		
8. Davenport			2675	2				5	1703		1
9. Andalusia			1364		2				100		6
10. Muscatine		2	242					1	132		
11. West Mercer County		2	4106					2	3990	4	2
12. Burlington	1	12	927			5			55		
13. Keokuk		5	4390		1		4	12	1783		3
Subtotals	1	21	15064	21	4	7	4	52	9244	6	13
MISSOURI RIVER											
14. Westfield		3	93						108		1
15. Sioux City	4	2	3754					1	1605	2	
16. De Soto NWR	9	2	1670						2000		
17. Omaha			3800						37		
18. Shenandoah	1742		8	CW <sup>a</sup>					1301		
Subtotals	1755	7	9325	0	0	0	0	1	5051	2	1
NORTHERN THIRD											
19. Decorah			828					1	92		
20. Bremer County			64						31		
21. Mason City		4	3758	13					2927		1
22. Worth County			2334						7		
23. Spirit Lake		19	2883			7			252		
24. Humboldt County			100						8		
25. Cherokee											
Subtotals	0	23	9967	13	0	7	0	1	3317	0	1
MIDDLE THIRD											
26. Wapello County		5	5000					1	134	57	
27. Lost Nation			45	5					10		
28. North Linn			169					1	113		
29. Cedar Rapids			2549					2	3912		1
30. Iowa City			732						750		
31. Amana			1								
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo		5	2080			3			392		
33. Grinnell			240		1				52	4	
34. Marshalltown			217						91		
35. Eldora-Union									1		
36. Southeast Webster		1	501	4					404		
37. Ames			415						27		
38. Boone County			97						39		
39. Saylorville Reservoir	1		7395			1		1	1110		
40. Des Moines		6	8263	6		111	1	4	3444	16	
41. Jamaica			4010					1	846	8	
42. Union County	2	7	1070	1			3	8	4195		
43. Carroll County			27						7		
44. Sac County			152	3					248		
45. Ida County		3	307						346		
Subtotals	5	27	33270	19	1	115	4	18	16121	85	1
SOUTHERN THIRD											
46. Rathbun Reservoir	1	12	1544	1				1	1098		
47. Red Rock Reservoir			3842	1		5	2	7	1075	1	
48. Taylor County		4	2142						480		
49. Siam-Hopkins			2								
50. Van Buren County		120	3996						15		
Subtotals	1	136	11526	2	0	5	2	8	2668	1	0
TOTALS	1762	214	79152	55	5	134	10	80	36401	94	16

**Table 2b. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2005–2006**

Location	Gr Wi Te	Ca	Re	Ri Ne Du	Le Sc	Bu	Co Go	Ho Me	Co Me	Ru Du	Gr Pa
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest		2	1		2						
2. Northwest Clayton County											
3. Southeast Clayton County											
4. Dubuque									42		
5. Green Island									33		CW
6. Clinton	2				25		17	2	2		
7. Princeton		1	2		4		87		850	2	
8. Davenport		3			11		20	2	48		
9. Andalusia		5			22		7		3		
10. Muscatine	5	5			15		420		116		
11. West Mercer County							1		67		
12. Burlington		5					6				
13. Keokuk	1	1821	14	86	327	5	6121	37	1299	25	
Subtotals	8	1842	17	86	406	5	6679	41	2460	27	0
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
14. Westfield			50				5			1	
15. Sioux City			2	2	3		53		9		
16. De Soto NWR							193		72	2	
17. Omaha	30			2			36		107		
18. Shenandoah											
Subtotals	30	0	52	4	3	0	287	0	188	3	0
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
19. Decorah											
20. Bremer County											49
21. Mason City											11
22. Worth County											16
23. Spirit Lake		1								2	39
24. Humboldt County											
25. Cherokee											
Subtotals	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	115
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
26. Wapello County		13		2	3	6	2		6		
27. Lost Nation											8
28. North Linn											
29. Cedar Rapids							120	28			
30. Iowa City					3			1			
31. Amana											
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo							1				11
33. Grinnell					2						
34. Marshalltown											
35. Eldora-Union											5
36. Southeast Webster					1						1
37. Ames		1									32
38. Boone County									20		
39. Saylorville Reservoir											
40. Des Moines		1	2	2	6	4	220	3	12		
41. Jamaica	2						2	1	2		
42. Union County			1	4	23		8				
43. Carroll County											2
44. Sac County											
45. Ida County					1						
Subtotals	2	15	3	8	39	10	353	33	40	0	59
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
46. Rathbun Reservoir	1		1		21		22	8	5020		
47. Red Rock Reservoir			1	1	9	1		1	9		
48. Taylor County					54			2			
49. Siam-Hopkins											
50. Van Buren County		1			4				20	1	
Subtotals	1	1	2	1	88	1	22	11	5049	1	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1859</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7341</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>7737</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>174</b>

Ri Ne Ph	Wi Tu	No Bo	Pi Bi Gr	Gr Bl He	Ba Ha	No Ha	Sh Sh Ha	Co Ha	Re Sh Ha	Re Ta Ha	Ro Le Ha	bu sp	Go Ea	Am Ke
10	157			1	413		1		1	22	1		1	3
64	221			2	56			1		54	9		2	9
13	80				117					57	17		2	22
1	21			2	318	1		1		42	2			23
6	7				333		2	3		83	7			11
9	86	29		10	165	1	3	1		51	14			15
14	62	18			434		2	5		41	1			10
16	40			45	629	4	3	3		63	1			11
1	43			14	336			2	2	19	1			22
	40	1	1	15	295	2	4	4		33	1			28
23	53			1	206	9	1	5		31	4			25
22	47			1	177	2	7	1	2	53	5		1	20
	32		10	50	287	3	3	6	1	50	3			20
179	889	48	11	141	3766	22	26	32	6	599	66	0	6	219
82	167				22			1		52	10			6
10	287				24			3		48	4			2
9	371	2			28	3	6	1		98	5			24
	178				24	1	3	2		84				10
18	32			CW	21	5	4		1	72	5		1	22
119	1035	2	0	0	119	9	13	7	1	354	24	0	1	64
101	88			1	43		2			46	2			11
362	51				21			1	2	40	3			8
98	12		1	1	16	1	3	1	1	30	4			2
139	3			2	8		3	3		15	1			2
215	4				5		3			12	3			1
23					3		1			4	1			4
73	108				10		2			27				4
1011	266	0	1	4	106	1	14	5	3	174	14	0	0	32
1				2	67		1			11	1			13
211	190	16			41	1	1	3		61	6	2		17
166		18			39			4		39	7			43
54	64		2	1	168		2	4		55				12
141	60	13	2		36	1	5	4		76	9	1		18
27	20			1	16		1			13	1			7
242	89			1	29		3	3	4	64	3			6
51	10				1					4				1
132	47				36		1	1		18				7
137	6				14			1		27	4			4
24	2				10		1			16	3			8
186	3				13	2	5	11		64	5			12
27	16			3	39		2	3		89	6	1		20
122	15			4	13	2	13	10		84	6			22
6	14			12	32		3	6		60				24
116		2		3	7			2		30				7
11	1				2		1			22	1			15
28				1	11	1	1	2		24				4
4	1				19		1			13	1			
128	34				7					36	4			8
1814	572	49	4	28	600	7	41	54	4	806	57	4	0	248
7	83			2	57	5	2	1		71	5			32
12	19			1	110	7	3	2		74				12
4	16	CW	1		9	2	1	1		42	2	5	1	1
5	12	1			CW					24	2	2		7
					29	2	1			6	3			4
28	130	1	1	3	205	16	7	4	0	217	12	7	1	68
3151	2892	100	17	176	4796	55	101	102	14	2150	173	11	8	631



**Table 2c. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2005–2006**

Location	Me	Am Co	Ki	Wi Sn	Ri Bi Gu	He Gu	Ro Pi	Eu Co Do	Mo Do	Ea Sc Ow	Gr Ho Ow
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest		1		1			251	6	56	4	1
2. Northwest Clayton County							223		41	2	7
3. Southeast Clayton County		1			1	2	199		25	6	4
4. Dubuque							389		128		
5. Green Island	1		1				98		330	8	7
6. Clinton				4			281		440	6	12
7. Princeton	1					1	72		461	3	2
8. Davenport		1			673	1284	646		417	3	12
9. Andalusia				1	9	7	166		65	5	5
10. Muscatine					8	12	164	6	848	4	16
11. West Mercer County	1			5	1		62	13	227	5	6
12. Burlington				6			372		241	2	4
13. Keokuk		3	5	4	1093	86	827	2	82		1
Subtotals	3	6	6	21	1785	1392	3750	27	3361	48	77
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
14. Westfield							220	12	9	1	1
15. Sioux City	1						532			2	5
16. De Soto NWR							345			2	2
17. Omaha							831		27	3	3
18. Shenandoah							302	51	37		11
Subtotals	1	0	0	0	0	0	2230	63	73	8	22
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
19. Decorah			1	1			256		70	3	1
20. Bremer County							351	3	252		1
21. Mason City							401		67		4
22. Worth County							188		2		1
23. Spirit Lake		51					159		21		1
24. Humboldt County							22	5	1		
25. Cherokee	1						216	30	4	2	2
Subtotals	1	51	1	1	0	0	1593	38	417	5	10
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
26. Wapello County		2			15		468				1
27. Lost Nation	1						60		159	7	2
28. North Linn							215		334	1	1
29. Cedar Rapids		2			1	1	391		255	1	13
30. Iowa City			1	CW			279		212	2	4
31. Amana							35		42	1	9
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo							305	1	373		3
33. Grinnell								12	14		
34. Marshalltown							168		40		1
35. Eldora-Union							108		44		4
36. Southeast Webster	1						86	1	3	1	
37. Ames							531	2	253	2	8
38. Boone County							208	32	98	10	9
39. Saylorville Reservoir	2			1			298		410	13	43
40. Des Moines	5	4	2		2		554	5	285		4
41. Jamaica	1			1			52		2	2	1
42. Union County							11	15	5	2	1
43. Carroll County	2						360	2			1
44. Sac County							119		2		
45. Ida County	1						92	21		1	10
Subtotals	13	8	3	2	18	1	4340	91	2531	43	115
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
46. Rathbun Reservoir				1	440	207	76	2	11	6	13
47. Red Rock Reservoir		1	1	1	22	2	58	16	121	1	2
48. Taylor County							18		25		1
49. Siam-Hopkins							14			CW	1
50. Van Buren County		4			6				25		
Subtotals	0	5	1	2	468	209	166	18	182	7	17
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2271</b>	<b>1602</b>	<b>12079</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>6564</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>241</b>

Ba Ow	Lo Ea Ow	No S-w Ow	Be Ki	Re He Wo	Re Be Wo	Ye Be Sa	Do Wo	Ha Wo	No Fl	Pi Wo	Lo Sh	No Sh	Bl Ja	Am Cr	Ho La
		1	1	2	42	1	39	5	4	6			89	245	60
2			3		42		54	11	8	4			134	293	136
3			5	10	67		89	15	3	6			133	271	1
			5		47		135	8		1		2	85	466	
1	4		6	2	42	3	64	13	13	4			143	174	485
6			7	3	72	2	58	9	15	4			121	339	409
2			3	2	26	3	39	6	8				78	64	105
12			3	5	67	5	137	15	22	2			169	1134	139
13			3	15	63		58	19	10	5			84	133	13
4			3	3	46		90	24	21	5			76	170	22
13	1		4	5	65	2	56	13	17	6			88	169	31
4			3	13	57	3	36	4	27	2			159	219	44
2			4	16	67	4	68	11	25	7			200	15000	24
62	5	1	50	76	703	23	923	153	173	52	0	3	1559	18677	1469
1					23		49	9	4				80	168	100
3			1	1	21		51	13	18			1	18	107	4
6	2		4	2	94		114	16	142				143	131	1
12			1	49	123	1	113	27	74	2			137	94	
12				3	62		61	15	26		2	1	243	53	29
34	2	0	6	55	323	1	388	80	264	2	2	2	621	553	134
			4	1	38	1	36	11	10	5		2	137	875	5
5			1	2	22		23	6	1			1	80	376	221
1					25		53	19	2				87	4305	17
	5				4		10	6					57	276	2
			1		28		77	39	6				82	63	15
							3						11	208	14
					15		16	6	23				50	110	208
6	5	0	6	3	132	1	218	87	42	5	0	3	504	6213	482
1			3		15		19	4	2				47	93	28
3	1		1	1	41		83	10	8	1		1	114	369	175
2			1	3	40		80	7	3	2		1	114	199	1
3			3		60	2	117	21	13	2			104	981	59
8			6	17	101		150	21	37	4			265	492	38
1		2	4	14	17		15	2	4	2			30	35	3
3			1	1	18		38	9	4			2	93	9443	11
				5	7		16	8	1				34	290	38
			1		8		30	4	1				34	120	3
1			1	1	8		13	2					22	102	20
2			3	1	15		21	5	2	2			26	207	4
5			2	1	105	1	178	46	12			1	207	8100	170
9	6	CW	2	10	151		183	86	8	7		CW	164	885	327
7	9		5	2	117	1	134	53	39			1	192	489	109
8			8	3	74	1	109	18	40				89	11000	7
	4		3	17	25		17	4	5				76	266	16
1	2		1	2	9		8	1	8				63	215	2
					13		10	7					31	523	5
					6		26	4					43	35	276
	7	1			7		12	2	7			1	103	203	1
54	29	3	45	78	837	5	1259	314	194	20		7	1851	34047	1293
6	7		6	13	26		43	10	40		2		245	175	46
1			2		54		52	6	31		1		98	252	136
1				20	25		29	7	23			2	129	338	
				8	20		14	1	18		2		110	33	32
			1	14	4		3						16	28	
8	7	0	9	55	129	0	141	24	112	0	5	2	598	826	215
164	48	4	116	267	2124	30	2929	658	785	79	7	17	5133	60316	3593

**Table 2d. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2005–2006**

Location	Bl Ca Ch	Tu Ti	Re Br Nu	Wh Br Nu	Br Cr	Ca Wr	Wi Wr	Go Cr Ki	Ea Bl	He Th	Am Ro
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>											
1. Yellow River Forest	122	14		50	1		4		53		12
2. Northwest Clayton County	99	10	1	111	13	4	2	1	59	2	3
3. Southeast Clayton County	239	79	1	127	16	2	4	6	17		1
4. Dubuque	204	49		95	11	3			90		1
5. Green Island	161	20	2	77	1	3	1	3	75	2	4
6. Clinton	188	26	1	115	2	8	3		19	2	4
7. Princeton	156	9	2	46	5	1	1		2		
8. Davenport	377	34	1	117	6	9	1	2	11	3	3
9. Andalusia	177	31	3	94	36	6	2	1	12	1	11
10. Muscatine	150	32		107	13	9	2	1	70	1	73
11. West Mercer County	135	28	1	95	4	5		1	51	1	30
12. Burlington	74	18	7	57	1	8	2	1	47	1	68
13. Keokuk	141	54	6	41	11	14	1	6	94		48
Subtotals	2223	404	25	1132	120	72	23	22	600	13	258
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>											
14. Westfield	102			48	2				28		1
15. Sioux City	98		5	43	2	4			20		
16. De Soto NWR	214	5	1	108	5	2	2	6	95		90
17. Omaha	426	41	3	209	7	5	1	23	52	1	53
18. Shenandoah	41		9	56	5			4			83
Subtotals	881	46	18	464	21	11	3	33	195	1	227
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>											
19. Decorah	137	18	6	50	1		1		25		21
20. Bremer County	103	1		17	1						
21. Mason City	112		6	33	3	1					2
22. Worth County	63		1	6							1
23. Spirit Lake	206		5	97	4		1				
24. Humboldt County	3		1	1							
25. Cherokee	36		4	17	1				8		
Subtotals	660	19	23	221	10	1	2	0	33	0	24
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>											
26. Wapello County	56	12	2	36	4	4		6	12		4
27. Lost Nation	121	16	2	36	2			2	1	2	1
28. North Linn	189	6	3	65							1
29. Cedar Rapids	275	42	1	99	4	8		4	1	1	5
30. Iowa City	388	81	9	95	5	4			13		15
31. Amana	42	7		11	4						
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	152			29	1	2			1		
33. Grinnell	22	1	1	18							
34. Marshalltown	25	1	3	24	1	2					1
35. Eldora-Union	35	2	1	25							1
36. Southeast Webster	32			25	1				1		
37. Ames	533	9	12	205	27	2	4		13	1	44
38. Boone County	494	51	2	343	9	2	1		2		
39. Saylorville Reservoir	364	20	1	109	8	2	2	8	17	1	8
40. Des Moines	159	16	1	98	10	3	2	1	4		197
41. Jamaica	44	7		25	2		2				35
42. Union County	13		3	3	1			1	31	1	425
43. Carroll County	14	1	2	16	1						
44. Sac County	30		2	14							
45. Ida County	17		2	24	1						10
Subtotals	3005	272	47	1300	81	29	11	22	96	6	747
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>											
46. Rathbun Reservoir	74	21	12	45				8	66		52
47. Red Rock Reservoir	85	12	2	33	2	2		1	17	1	1
48. Taylor County	30			27	2				38		191
49. Siam-Hopkins	49	3		25	1				36		54
50. Van Buren County	10	3		3	1			1			2
Subtotals	248	39	14	133	6	2	0	10	157	1	300
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7017</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>3250</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1081</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1556</b>

No Mo	Eu St	Ce Wa	Ye Ru Wa	Ea To	Am Tr Sp	Fo Sp	So Sp	Sw Sp	Wh Th Sp	Ha Sp	Wh Cr Sp	Da Ey Ju	La Lo	Sn Bu
	99	4	9		254		2		2			683		
	625	57			120		9		2		3	825	50	1
	935	132			156		26		1		6	401	1	
	1041	10	12		178	1	8		2		12	384		
	1920	21			526		6	2	1			795	5	56
	2523	207	4		397	1	19	8	2		12	545	123	1
	595				945		14	3	1		15	1100	9	45
	7619	1			261	2	93	1	17		8	720	62	20
	4128	136	1		985	12	36	18	70			911	14	4
1	1952	31	7		74		19	2	4			224	1	
	2507	87	4	1	155		27	12	6			301		
	1182	140			245	3	13	2	19		2	408	50	
	1919	299			284	4	64	15	31	4	34	756	615	22
1	27045	1125	37	1	4580	23	336	63	158	4	92	8053	930	149
	312				169					1		332		
	1406	20			38		1			20	1	326		
	1853	162		2	384		23		CW	15		429		
	3504	106		1	149		10		4	14		896		
	1257	151			539		3		24	26	10	1164	40	
0	8332	439	0	3	1279	0	37	0	28	76	11	3147	40	0
	1385	16	1		528		2					862		
	1171				167		10					388	51	68
	418	22			126		CW		1			448	104	39
	609				174		2			1		293	88	328
	1669				15			6		2		355	3	253
	39				10							90		
	373				65					1		259	17	86
0	5664	38	1	0	1085	0	14	6	1	4	0	2695	263	774
	509	20			85				2		1	343		
	408				350		14	2				936	22	15
	981	60			25				3			352		180
	581	15	1		124	1	22		7			768		
	716	142	3		510	1	26	5	41		6	932		
	45				42		3				1	60		
	1183				29		3	1	2			343	18	
					19		3					128		
	417				40							239		
	231				49	1	3			1		99		
	1400				21			2		5		72		
	2143	111			209	CW	15		19	18	CW	887		10
	2296	144			83	CW	23	1	3	3		934	4330	9
	2649	185		1	773	5	81	9	166	17	8	1493	73	87
	2400	113			74		18		11	1	1	502		
	217	137			24	1	3			2		202		
1	914	730			98	1	1		1	5		437		1
	457				7							77		
	192											77		15
	686	4			181		1			9		256		
1	18425	1661	4	1	2743	10	216	20	255	61	17	9137	4443	317
	2	387	690		378		6		3		2	246		
	944	18	2		378	2	8		6		1	388		
	533	474	1		129	1		1		19	3	396		
	751	54			319		1					341	4	
1	61				23							12		
3	2676	1236	3	0	1227	3	15	1	9	19	6	1383	4	0
5	62142	4499	45	5	10914	36	618	90	451	164	126	24415	5680	1240

**Table 2e. Christmas Bird Count Data, 2005–2006**

Location	No Ca	Re Wi Bl	me sp	Ru Bl	Co Gr	Br He Co	Pu Fi	Ho Fi	Pi Si	Am Go
<b>MISSISSIPPI RIVER</b>										
1. Yellow River Forest	294	1					3	98		203
2. Northwest Clayton County	173		5				53	113		144
3. Southeast Clayton County	244	1					10	107		228
4. Dubuque	171						33	187		95
5. Green Island	190	7			2	49	18	53	1	83
6. Clinton	221	207	7		12	38	19	42		146
7. Princeton	168					2	4	97		75
8. Davenport	470	222	2		5	1583	3	155	4	253
9. Andalusia	247	98			3	41	80	41	3	39
10. Muscatine	189	2					12	215		160
11. West Mercer County	229	2		6		3	22	51		132
12. Burlington	210	57	1		4	3	15	155	11	156
13. Keokuk	207	30	5		11	6	43	90	9	157
Subtotals	3013	627	20	6	37	1725	315	1404	28	1871
<b>MISSOURI RIVER</b>										
14. Westfield	24	51	4				1	20	1	156
15. Sioux City	43	300	1				4	7		61
16. De Soto NWR	127	380	19			1	75	9		132
17. Omaha	168	1	45				1	95		215
18. Shenandoah	270	515	63		3		3	279		582
Subtotals	632	1247	132	0	3	1	84	410	1	1146
<b>NORTHERN THIRD</b>										
19. Decorah	157						13	195	1	213
20. Bremer County	142							382		114
21. Mason City	112			4	1		19	225	6	113
22. Worth County	13	30				1	8	54	4	117
23. Spirit Lake	24			3				211		79
24. Humboldt County	14		1		1	2		1		12
25. Cherokee	14		4		2		44	30		106
Subtotals	476	30	5	7	4	3	84	1098	11	754
<b>MIDDLE THIRD</b>										
26. Wapello County	172	1				40	56	68		89
27. Lost Nation	371		1		9	1	6	135		36
28. North Linn	200		1				8	187		60
29. Cedar Rapids	393		15				2	184	1	112
30. Iowa City	744	26	14	1		1	19	243	1	292
31. Amana	33	50			2	9	2	6		15
32. Cedar Falls-Waterloo	205	5	6		2		8	295		79
33. Grinnell	89							49		52
34. Marshalltown	118		4		1		8	55		36
35. Eldora-Union	51		28				1	4		20
36. Southeast Webster	26					2	10	3		26
37. Ames	363	1	11	2	2	1	7	282	5	202
38. Boone County	307	2			2		19	70	1	386
39. Saylorville Reservoir	402	626	40		1	4	18	127	12	591
40. Des Moines	163				1			147		228
41. Jamaica	72	12	12		1		6	27		77
42. Union County	51	60		1	2		5	34		42
43. Carroll County	26		7							33
44. Sac County	41		12		19			1	2	18
45. Ida County	38	423			3		8	14		108
Subtotals	3865	1206	151	4	45	58	183	1931	22	2502
<b>SOUTHERN THIRD</b>										
46. Rathbun Reservoir	154	150			27	1	40	70	1	130
47. Red Rock Reservoir		268	11	25	14	3	8	24		92
48. Taylor County	62	85					5	83		141
49. Siam-Hopkins	87	32						5		168
50. Van Buren County	6						5			35
Subtotals	309	535	11	25	41	4	58	182	1	566
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8295</b>	<b>3645</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>1791</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>5025</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>6839</b>



Ho Sp	Eu Tr Sp
371	
617	
688	
760	
719	
525	
692	3
1122	
540	45
581	75
453	237
286	65
582	334
7936	759
361	
475	
256	
646	
1402	
3140	0
402	
998	
318	
186	
519	
58	
268	
2749	0
168	
1262	
1250	
922	
1180	4
80	
1028	
343	
132	
175	
1150	
1148	
811	
1003	
284	
120	
90	
395	
198	
11739	4
422	
103	
47	
73	
645	0
26209	763

<sup>a</sup>CW = count week.

**Table 3. Species reported on three or fewer Christmas Bird Counts, 2005–2006**

Species	Counts
Greater White-fronted Goose	Cedar Rapids (1), Rathbun (7)
Ross's Goose	De Soto (1)
Tundra Swan	Clinton (2), Decorah (1), Cedar Rapids (1)
Greater Scaup	Keokuk (419), Spirit Lake (1), Union County (1)
Black Scoter	Keokuk (1)
Long-tailed Duck	Keokuk (1), Cedar Rapids (CW), Red Rock (2)
Red-breasted Merganser	Davenport (1), Keokuk (2)
duck species	Dubuque (1), Green Island (1)
Ruffed Grouse	SE Clayton County (2)
Common Loon	Saylorville (1)
White Pelican	Davenport (1), Keokuk (14), Red Rock (1)
Double-crested Cormorant	Davenport (3), Keokuk (1)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Cedar Rapids (CW)
Turkey Vulture	Boone County (1)
accipiter species	Iowa City (1), Boone County (1)
Peregrine Falcon	Davenport (2), Shenandoah (1), Spirit Lake (1)
Prairie Falcon	Jamaica (1)
Sandhill Crane	Union County (1)
Bonaparte's Gull	Cedar Rapids (1)
Thayer's Gull	Davenport (1), Keokuk (3), Rathbun (1)
Glaucous Gull	Keokuk (1)
Snowy Owl	Union County (1)
Short-eared Owl	Cherokee (1), Iowa City (1), Siam-Hopkins (5)
owl species	De Soto (1), Iowa City (2), Boone County (1)
shrike sp.	Worth County (1), Sac County (1)
Black-billed Magpie	Westfield (7)
Marsh Wren	Keokuk (1)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Muscatine (1)
Townsend's Solitaire	Taylor County (1)
Varied Thrush	Bremer County (1), Eldora-Union (1)
Gray Catbird	Andalusia (1), Saylorville (1), Taylor County (1)
Brown Thrasher	Cedar Rapids (1)
American Pipit	Red Rock (1)
Spotted Towhee	SE Clayton County (1), Iowa City (1)
Field Sparrow	Davenport (1), Rathbun (1)
Savannah Sparrow	Princeton (1), Worth County (1)
Lincoln's Sparrow	Saylorville (2), Rathbun (2)
Eastern Meadowlark	Green Island (2), Clinton (3), Princeton (13)
Western Meadowlark	Princeton (1), Saylorville (2)
Brewer's Blackbird	SE Webster County (2), Rathbun (2), Shenandoah (2)
Great-tailed Grackle	Des Moines (1)
Common Redpoll	Ames (1)

# Field Reports — Winter 2005–2006

*Robert I. Cecil*



*Robert I. Cecil*

## WEATHER

It was a schizophrenic winter season. December blew in with a bone-chilling blast that made the first ten days one of the coldest on record, followed by some moderation, and then a spring-like January that was the second warmest in 134 years of records. Lulled into thinking winter was over, February reminded us that we still lived in Iowa, with a roller-coaster ride that included mid-month highs of 67 in Glenwood and Little Sioux and then a low of -26 degrees on the 18th in Elkader. Overall, February was still the 50th warmest on record. Precipitation was roughly normal for December and January but February was the 12th driest on record.

## GENERAL TRENDS

This winter's fluctuating temperatures and especially the balmy January offered a rare opportunity to observe which species are moved by the prospects of newly exposed food sources and unchallenged territories, and those whose northward travel schedule is dictated by photo-period or other imponderable motivators — probably more reliable barometers of the availability of certain foods. At Keokuk, the Canvasbacks and scaup returned almost immediately to any opening in the river ice, whether during a January thaw or a March thaw. This year's January thaw nudged small numbers of myriad species northward into central and northwest Iowa during the first two weeks of the month. Most waterfowl made an appearance, as did Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, and a few others where mid-winter reports could have been either northward migrants or birds attempting to winter. Paul Hertzell noted that, in northern Iowa, the abrupt appearance of winter drove out about everything that could fly. The January thaw brought optimism, but endless transects with Rita Goranson across barren fields proved birdless, and they had to wait until the end of the period to get the first trickling of northward migrants. Unfortunately, the January optimism we shared with the birds was extinguished in February when winter returned to us and the birds returned to wherever they came from. Returning to a more traditional schedule, our earliest migrants begin appearing around the state during the last week or two of February.

Always of interest, winter finches were, once again, noteworthy no-shows. A handful of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins plus a single Common Redpoll made up this year's invasion, unless one counts the possible Brambling.

## UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Accidental species reported included Lark Bunting and a potential first state record Brambling. Casual species reported included Brant, California Gull, Iceland Gull, Great

Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, and White-winged Dove.

#### SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental species. \* = documented. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **A** = area, **CBC** = Christmas Bird Count, **L** = lake, **m.ob.** = many observers, **M** = Marsh, **NA** = nature area, **P** = park, **Res** = Reservoir, **R** = river, **SF** = State Forest, **SP** = State Park, **WA** = wildlife area.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Mid-winter reports included 400 on 15 Jan at Pool 19 Lee (CJC, CRE), 26 on 27 Jan in *Decatur* (JRL), and 4 on 31 Jan at Squaw Creek P *Linn* (BSc). The first in southern Iowa were 6 on 14 Feb at L. Ahquabi SP *Warren* (SSP) and 25 on 19 Feb at Big Creek SP *Polk* (BE); in central Iowa, 7 on 15 Feb in *Marshall* (MPr); in northern Iowa, 158 on 25 Feb in *Worth* (PH), 400 on 26 Feb at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (WO, KRW), and 38 on 28 Feb at *Allamakee* (FL).

**Snow Goose:** A single bird was reported at 5 *Polk* locations through mid-Jan; unusual were 200 on 15 Jan at Pool 19 (CRE). Mid-winter reports included one at Rathbun Res *Appanoose* on 21 Jan (RLC), 4 on 27 Jan in *Story* (WO), and 2 on 28 Jan in *Boone* (WO). Migrants appeared on in small numbers on 11 Feb in *Winnebago* (JB). On 14 Feb, there were 3,000 at Snyder's Bend *Woodbury* (GLV) and 3,600 at Green Valley L *Union* (RIA/PHA).

**Ross's Goose:** All: one on 1 Dec at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), one on 9 Dec at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (MOR), one on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC-details, JB-details, JG, SJD), one on 25 Feb at Rice L *Worth* (PH), 2 on 26 Feb at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (WO, KRW), and one on

26 Feb at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RLC-details).

**Cackling Goose:** This recently separated species has generated lots of observer interest with 16 reports, fewer than half with details of identification. Peak mid-winter counts were of 15 on 7 Jan at Red Rock Res in *Marion* (AMJ-details) and 12 on 26–30 Jan at Ada Hayden P (WO). Dwarfing other counts were 180 on 17 Feb at Saylorville Res (AB-details), 1,200 on 25 Feb at Rice L and Silver L in *Worth* (PH-details), and 200 on 26 Feb at Little Wall L (KRW).

**BRANT:** There were 3 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 Lee (\*SJD).

**Mute Swan:** Single birds were reported from *Cerro Gordo*, *Polk*, and *Linn*, and *Lee*.

**Trumpeter Swan:** All: 2 on 2–3 Dec at Heron Bend A *Lee* (JLF, CJC), one on 2 Dec at Saylorville Res (BE), 6 on 4 Dec at Ada Hayden P (WO), 13 on 12 Dec–30 Jan in *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), 2 on 9 Jan at *Muscatine* (JLF), 2 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD), 2 on 27 Feb at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC), and 3 on 28 Feb at Rice L *Worth* (PH).

**Tundra Swan:** All: one on 1–2 Jan at Cedar L *Linn* (DP, CJC, CRE, JLF), and one on 13 Jan at Maffitt Res *Dallas* (RIA/PHA).

**Wood Duck:** Unusual was one on 10 Jan at Mason City (RGo). Migrants appeared on 18 Feb in *Lee* (RLC) and 20 Feb in *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Gadwall:** There were nine reports from 14 Jan through the season of one to 6 birds, all in the south except for one on 8 Jan at Lansing *Allamakee* (\*RZ) and 3 on 6 Feb in *Winneshek* (DeC). The peak count by far was of 111 on 26 Dec at Pleasant Hill *Polk* (SJD).

**American Wigeon:** From one to 4 were reported during Jan and Feb in *Johnson*, *Hamilton*, *Marion*, *Polk*, *Winneshek*, and *Woodbury*. Migrants appeared by the end of February.

**American Black Duck:** Three wintered in Cedar Rapids (BSc); there were also 3 on 14 Jan at Polk City WA Polk (WO). The only other mid-winter report was of 2 from Red Rock Res (AMJ, JB, SJD, JG). Migrants were noted in Lee on 18 Feb (RLC) and Saylorville Res on 19 Feb (DTh).

**Mallard:** The peak count was 3,000 on 24 Dec at Twelve Mile L Union (SJD). Mid-winter reports included 1,600 on 7 Jan at Polk City WA Polk (SJD) and 1,400 on 3 Feb at Saylorville Res (SJD). Migrants included 2,000 on 20 Feb at Brown's L Woodbury (GLV).

**Northern Shoveler:** By far the most among few reports were of 97 on 10 Dec at Ottumwa (SJD) and 51 on 2 Jan in Wapello (RLC). Migrants appeared on 27 Feb at Little Wall L. Hamilton (SSP, KLP) and 28 Feb at Cedar L Linn (DP).

**Northern Pintail:** The warmer January temperatures enticed some to return early, such as 7 on 5 Feb at Twelve Mile L Union (JG), 237 on 3 Feb at Saylorville Res (SJD), and one on 3 Feb at New L Woodbury (BFH). Other mid-winter reports were of singles at Cedar Rapids (DP, CRE), Hardin (MPr), and Woodbury (BFH). Wintering or very early was one on 14 Feb at Ada Hayden P (WO). Migrants appeared in the south with 225 on 26 Feb in Polk (BE); 10 were in Worth by 28 Feb (PH).

**Green-winged Teal:** By far the most was 35 on 7 Jan at Lake Manawa (LJP, BKP). Other mid-winter reports included 2 on 9 Jan in Muscatine (JLF), one on 18 Jan in Scott (WMZ), 4 on 2–6 Feb in Story (WO), and one on 5 Feb in Union (JG). Migrants began appearing in very small numbers by the end of the period.

**Canvasback:** The 10,000 CRE reported on 3 Dec at Pool 19 Lee were largely gone by the CBC two weeks later, although 4,400 were there on 14 Jan (SJD). The next largest count was 57 on

12 Jan at Red Rock Res (AB), also lured northward by the thaw. Very small numbers were reported in a few southern counties during mid-winter and small numbers of migrants appeared by the end of the season.

**Redhead:** Mid-winter reports and probably first wave migrants included 2 on 10 Jan in Lee (JLF), 4 on 14 Jan at Rathbun Res (SJD), and 16 on 5 Feb in Union (JG). Other returnees included 3 on 20 Feb in Decatur (KLP/SSP), 2 on 25 Feb in Scott (DP), and 12 on 26 Feb in Pottawattamie (LJP, BKP).

**Ring-necked Duck:** There were numerous reports of this frequent winter straggler, all from southern Iowa except for 15 migrants on 28 Feb in Worth (PH) and 7 on 28 Feb in Allamakee (FL). Other high counts included 62 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD), 108 on 5 Feb at Twelve Mile L Union (JG, SJD), 38 on 14 Feb at Lake Ahquabi S.P. Warren (SSP), and 23 on 19 Feb at Saylorville Res (BE).

**Greater Scaup:** The Keokuk CBC produced 419 at Pool 19, the most ever reported in Iowa; 277 were there on 14 Jan (SJD). The only report away from Lee was of 3 on 4 Dec at Saylorville Res (WO).

**Lesser Scaup:** The most among mid-winter reports were 255 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD) and 14 on 3 Feb at Red Rock Res (AB); other reports were of 1–4 from Pottawattamie, Linn, and Ida. Migrants reached southern Iowa on 25 Feb with 9 in Polk (JG), and northern Iowa with 4 on 27 Feb in Decorah (DeC) and 6 on 28 Feb in Worth (PH).

**Black Scoter:** There was one on the Keokuk CBC.

**Long-tailed Duck:** All: one on 15 Dec–11 Feb in Cedar Rapids (BSc, DP, m.ob.), 2 on 10–17 Dec at Red Rock Res (SJD-photo, JG), and 2 on 10–14 Jan at Montrose Lee (JLF, SJD). There were also CBC reports from the same areas.



**Bufflehead:** The only reports after the CBC period were 2 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD), one on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC), and one on 21 Jan at Saylorville Res (SJD).

**Common Goldeneye:** High counts were 100 on 7 Jan at L Manawa Pottawattamie (LJP/BKP), 106 on 7 Jan at Dale Maffitt Res Polk (JG), and 500 on 15 Jan at Pool 19 Lee (CRE). Migrants appeared in northern Iowa by 25 Feb.

**Hooded Merganser:** At Cedar L there were 20 on 17 Dec (CRE) and at least one wintered (DP). There were 13 other reports of one to 11 birds throughout the season, most in the south. The most northerly mid-winter report was of up to 4 on 1–3 Feb at New L Woodbury (GLV, BFH).

**Common Merganser:** As expected, the largest concentrations were at the big reservoirs: 8,000 on 16 Dec at Rathbun Res (RLC), 5,350 on 12 Jan and 8,000 on 21 Jan at Red Rock Res (AB, SJD, JB), and 4,000 on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (JB). Migrants appeared statewide during the last four days of the period.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** The only reports outside of CBC reports in Keokuk and Davenport were 2 on 1 Dec at Lake Manawa (LJP/BKP) and 3 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD). Somewhat early were 2 on 19 Feb in Scott (CJC).

**Ruddy Duck:** Scarce: the only lingerers past the CBC period were 4 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD).

**Gray Partridge:** Both *Cerro Gordo* and *Kossuth* had December reports of 21 birds (MCK, PH). The only other reports were of 4 on 16 Dec in *Hardin* (MPR) and 5 on 29 Dec in *Hamilton* (SJD).

**Northern Bobwhite:** All: 20 wintered in *Decatur* (JRL) and 12 on 15 Jan in *Warren* (JS).

**Common Loon:** All: A single bird was stranded on the ice until 19 Dec at Saylorville Res, ultimately providing both

a CBC report and a meal for a Bald Eagle (JJD, SJD, JB, JG).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Wintering were 2 at Cedar L Linn (BSc, CRE, DP) and 2 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SJD). Returning migrants were noted on 18 Feb at Pool 19 Lee (RLC).

**Horned Grebe:** All: 2 on 2 Dec at Saylorville Res (BE) and 2 on 2 Dec at Pool 19 (JLF).

**American White Pelican:** All: one on 3 Dec at Red Rock Res (JG), one on 4 Dec at the Grammer Grove hawk watch Marshall (MPR), 2 on 4 and 11 Dec at Saylorville Res (WO, RLC), 4 on 10 Dec at Keokuk Lee (JLF), 2 on 11 Jan in Scott (SMF), 2 on 25 Feb at Ft. Madison Lee (WO), and one on 25 Feb at Bettendorf Scott (DP).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** Linger-ing were 7 on 11 Dec at Saylorville Res (RLC), one on 1 Jan at Bettendorf (JLF), and one on 10 Jan near Burlington Des Moines (JLF).

**Great Blue Heron:** Unusual for mid-winter were 19 on 10 Jan in Ft. Madison (JLF); also unusual were 2 on 21 Jan in *Black Hawk* (MWJ). Probably a migrant was one on 20 Feb at Brown's L. Woodbury (GLV); others included one on 25 Feb in Scott (DP) and 7 on 25 Feb in *Louisa* (WO).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** A single bird remained at Cedar L until 15 Dec (BSc), the eighth consecutive winter season record for this species at this location.

**Turkey Vulture:** One was reported from the Boone County CBC. Very early was one seen twice on 6 Feb in *Decatur* (JRL) and one on 2 Feb at Ames (\*Rose Danaher).

**Bald Eagle:** The migration peaked at the Grammer Grove hawk watch on 2 Dec with 74 birds (Eugene and Eloise Armstrong fide MPR).

**Northern Harrier:** There were reports throughout the season from about 15 locations; the most northerly by far was one on 25 Feb in *Mitchell* (PH). Most reports were of one or 2 birds except for 3 on 6 Jan–12 Feb at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV, BFH), 4 on 21 Jan at Red Rock Res (JB), 3 on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC), 4 on 30 Jan at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (BE), and 7 on 5 Feb at Hawkeye WA (CRE).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** There were about 15 reports from around the state and throughout the season. Rita Goranson had both a sharp-shinned and a Cooper's wintering at her Mason City feeder.

**Cooper's Hawk:** There were 3 on 18 Dec at Saylorville Res (JB), 3 on 4 Feb at Rathbun Res (RLC), and about 19 other reports of single birds, mostly from northern Iowa. Mark Proescholdt turned up 6 during the season.

**Northern Goshawk:** All: One on 7 Dec in *Scott* (KLP/SSP) and another that struck a window on 1 Jan in *Johnson Polk* and was turned over to the raptor rehab center at the ISU veterinary clinic (SJD). This was one of the poorest seasons in years for this species.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** All: One on 22 Dec and 22 Jan at George Wyth SP (JG, DP), one on 9 Jan at Stephens SF *Lucas* (RTr), one on 15 Jan at Annett Nature Center *Warren* (AMJ), and one on 21 Jan in *Allamakee* (DAk).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Five Harlan's were reported.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** High counts by far included 9 on 21 Jan in *O'Brien* (DTh) and 8 on 20 Feb in *Johnson* (DP). There were about 24 other reports of 1–4 birds from throughout the season and the state.

**Golden Eagle:** All: one on 1 Dec in *Polk* (JG), 2 on 2 Dec at the Grammer Grove hawk watch (Eloise and Eugene Armstrong fide MPr), one on 31 Dec in

*Taylor* (KN), one on 4 Feb in *Grundy* (SJD), and one on 26 Feb in *Warren* (JS).

**Merlin:** At least 6 roosted at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines (JG, RIC, BN, JB); Jay Gilliam identified 3 fem Taiga and 2 fem Prairie; another was unidentified. About 14 other birds were reported; more southerly reports dominated but there were two January reports from *Cerro Gordo* (CJF, RGo).

**Peregrine Falcon:** All: Two wintering in Davenport (SMF), one wintering in Des Moines (RIC), plus singles on 21 Jan at Cedar Rapids (BSc) and 20 Feb in *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Prairie Falcon:** All: one on the Jamaica CBC, one on 6 Jan at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (\*GLV), and one on 1 Feb in *Clay* (LAS-details).

**American Coot:** Two wintered at Cedar L in *Cedar Rapids* (BSc). Other post-CBC reports included one on 7 Jan at Red Rock Res, (AMJ), 4 on 14 Jan at Dale Maffitt Res near *Des Moines* (AB), one on 5 Feb at Twelve Mile L *Union* (JG), and 2 on 5 Feb in *Ringgold* (JG). Wintering or early was one on 14 Feb at Ada Hayden P (WO). Migrants appeared on 20 Feb in *Woodbury* (GLV) and 25 Feb at Maffitt Res (JG).

**Sandhill Crane:** Unusual was one on 14 Jan through the season at Cedar Rapids (BSc, DP, CRE). There was a juvenile on 24 Dec at Green Valley L *Union* (SJD-photo). Very early, evidently, was one on 28 Feb at Poole Slough *Allamakee* (FL).

**Killdeer:** Wintering were singles at Swan L *Johnson* (CJC, CRE) and the Decorah trout hatchery *Winneshiek* (DeC); the only other mid-winter report was of one on 12 Jan at Chichaqua A *Polk* (DK). The first migrants were 2 on 3 Feb at Saylorville Res (SJD) and 3 on 13 Feb in *Warren* (JSi); they were found throughout the state by the end of the period.

**Wilson's Snipe:** One wintered at the Decorah trout hatchery (DeC). There were 3 on 1 Jan in Warren (JSi) and one on 21 Jan at Red Rock Res (SJD).

**American Woodcock:** Unusual were 2 window kills on 15 Dec in West Des Moines (DTh). Another report was referred to the Records Committee.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** All: one on 3 Dec at Saylorville Res (SJD) and one on 10–18 Dec at Cedar L (BSc, CE).

**Ring-billed Gull:** There were 6,000 on 3 Dec at Red Rock Res (JJD, SJD) and 7,000 on 14 Jan in Lee (SJD); lured back there by the unseasonable weather were 480 on 12 Jan and one made it to Ada Hayden P on 15 Jan (WO). There were 4,000 on 4 Feb at Rathbun Res (RLC).

**CALIFORNIA GULL:** There was one first winter bird on 2 Dec at Ft. Madison Lee (\*JLF).

**Herring Gull:** There were 879 on 10 Dec at Ottumwa (SJD), 2 on 12 Dec at Red Rock Res (AB), and 600 on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC), and 484 on 21 Jan at Red Rock Res (SJD).

**Thayer's Gull:** There were at least 8 in the Quad Cities during the season, including a peak daily count on 21 Feb of 3 first winter birds and three adults at Lock and Dam 14 (SMF, m.ob.). The other non-CBC reports were of one on 3 Dec at Keokuk (CRE), one adult on 4 Dec at Saylorville Res (SJD), 2 (one adult and one third basic) on 10 Dec at Ottumwa (SJD), one adult on 14 Jan at Ft. Madison Lee (SJD), one adult and one juv on 14 Jan at Rathbun Res (SJD), and one juv on 21 Jan at Red Rock Res (SJD).

**ICELAND GULL:** There was one alternate plumage ad at Credit Isl Scott from 26 Feb through the period (Jim Forde-photo\*, SMF-photo, \*CJC, \*DP, \*AMJ). Other reports were referred to the Records Committee.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** Steve Freed found 4 from 26 Dec through the

season in Scott, including a peak count on 27 Feb of one juv, one third winter, and one adult; a second winter bird was reported on 29 Dec (JG). There was also one juv on 14 Jan at Rathbun Res (SJD).

**Glaucous Gull:** All: One on 1 Dec at Lake Manawa (LJP/BKP), one juv on 10 Dec at Ottumwa (SJD), up to 4 (2 juv, one second winter, and one adult) from 28 Dec through the period in Scott (SMF, JLF, DP, CJC), one first winter on 21 Jan and one third winter on 4 Feb at Rathbun Res (RLC), one adult on 21 Jan and 11 Feb at Red Rock Res (SJD, KRW), and one juv on 28 Jan at Saylorville Res (SJD).

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** All: One on 2 Dec and another on 10 Jan at Pool 19 (JF), and up to 4 first-winter birds from late Dec on in Scott (\*SE, \*JG, \*DAK).

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE:** All: one first winter on 2–4 Dec at Saylorville Res (AB-photo, \*JG, \*RLC, \*SJD). One on 10 Dec at Red Rock Res was probably the same bird (\*SJD-photo)

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** The high counts and 41 in Lee (CJC, CRE), 25 in Marshall (MPR-details), 21 in Ida (GLV), 17 in Lucas (JJD), and 17 in Boone (WO). Other reports were of 1–8 birds in Marion, Decatur, Lucas, Poweshiek, Grundy, Cherokee, Wayne, Warren, Winneshiek, Wright, Palo Alto, and Polk. Jay Gilliam has deduced that a key habitat requirement for this species is a small town with a Casey's.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE:** One made a brief appearance at Spencer on 31 Dec–1 Jan (\*LS).

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** There were a handful of reports from around the state. Red outnumbered gray four to two.

**Snowy Owl:** All reported to Editor Bob Cecil: one on 14 Dec in Harrison (\*Bob Barry), one on 24 Dec in Union (SJD, JG), one on 27–28 Dec in Carroll (WO), one on 27–29 Jan Boone (WO, RIA/PHA, KRW, HZ, DJN, m.ob.), and one

on 21 Feb near Jester P. in *Polk* (SJD). Additional single sightings confirmed by Paul Hertzell (all fide Paul Hertzell), but not reported to Editor Bob Cecil: 25 Nov in *Emmet*, 30 Nov in *Dallas*, 7 Dec in *Osceola*, 11 Dec in *Wayne*, 15 Dec in *Dallas*, 17 Dec in *Jones*, 26 Dec in *Ida*, 26 Dec in *Madison*, 31 Dec in *Black Hawk*, 9 Jan in *Appanoose*, 20 Jan in *Johnson*, 2 Mar in *Hamilton*, 25 Apr in *Cerro Gordo*. See article on Snowy Owl invasion by Paul Hertzell in this issue.

**Long-eared Owl:** There were 14 reports of 1–6 from throughout the season and the state. Some remained for extended periods at Hawkeye WA, Hooper WA Warren, and Lee Schoenewe's back yard in Spencer.

**Short-eared Owl:** All: one on 1 Dec at Ada Hayden P (WO), 4 on 11 Dec–7 Jan in *Decatur* (JRL), one on 23 Dec at Hooper WA Warren (JG), 5 on 23 Dec in *Taylor* (KN), 4 on 12 Jan in *Wayne* (RIA/PHA), one then 2 on 21 and 29 Jan at Owego Wetlands Woodbury BFH, GLV), one on 21 Dec in *Dallas* RIA/PHA), one on 7 Feb at Big Creek SP *Polk* (SJD), 5 on 15 Feb at *Decorah* (DeC), and 3 on 19 Feb at Big Marsh *Butler* (KRW).

**Northern Saw-Whet Owl:** All: one on 3 Dec–21 Jan at Moorehead P *Ida* (DoP, m.ob.), one on 7 Dec–19 Jan at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (MWJ, AIB), one on 27 Dec in *Carroll* (WO), one on 29 Dec–3 Jan at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (MCD, JLF), one on 2 Jan–22 Feb at Grammer Grove WA (MPr), one on 7 Jan at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE), 2 on 7 Jan at Union Grove SP *Tama* (MPr), one on 27 Jan at Osborne Nature Center *Clayton* (DAK), one on 29 Jan at Stephens SF *Lucas* (JS), 2 on 4 Feb in *Iowa* (DP), a peak of 3 on 11 Feb at Ledges SP *Boone* (AB), and one on 28 Feb in *Worth* (PH).

**Belted Kingfisher:** There were the usual scattered reports from throughout the season and the state.

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** By far the most were 16 on 6 Dec at Springbrook SP *Guthrie* (RLC) and 8 on 14 Feb at Lake Ahquabi SP *Warren* (SSP). Among nine other reports, there were only three of 1–3 birds after the CBC period. This species probably merits additional attention and consistent reporting.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** There were only two post-CBC reports: one on 29 Jan–18 Feb at *Iowa City* (DP) and one on 18 Jan in *Cass* (MAP).

**Northern Flicker:** There was a red-shafted form on 17 Jan in *Warren* (JS).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** There were no extralimital reports. Approaching the edge of their usual Iowa range, there were three reported from *Decatur* (SSP, KLP, JRL).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** All: one on 10–26 Dec at Lake Ahquabi SP (RTr), and one on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC-details).

**Northern Shrike:** There were reports of 30 birds from 24 counties, a little above average for recent years. The most southerly included one on 27 Dec in *Clarke* (JS) and one on 5 Feb in *Ringgold* (JG).

**Black-billed Magpie:** There were 5 seen on 31 Dec at Broken Kettle Grasslands in *Plymouth* (\*JB, JG).

**American Crow:** The peak at the Hitchcock hawk watch *Pottawattamie* was 9,700 on 8 Dec (MOR).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** There were 14 reports from all over, almost all of 2–4 birds.

**Brown Creeper:** The high counts for this expected winter species were both from *Polk*: 5 on 10 Jan at Jester P (AB) and 5 on 4 Feb in Des Moines (BE).

**Carolina Wren:** The most northerly reports came from *Cerro Gordo* (RGo), *Woodbury* (GLV, BFH), and *Winneshiek* (DeC).



**Winter Wren:** The most was 3 through 19 Jan at Lake Ahquabi SP Warren (JS). Other post-CBC reports came from Decorah (DeC), Springbrook SP Guthrie (RIA/PHA), Sioux City (BFH, GLV), and 2 different birds in Polk (DK, JRC).

**Marsh Wren:** For the second straight year, there was one on the Keokuk CBC at Montrose.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** The only post-CBC was of one on 28 Jan at Ledges SP Boone (WO).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** Unusual was one on 14 Jan at Ft. Madison (SJD-photo); another was on the Muscatine County CBC

**Eastern Bluebird:** Good numbers were reported from around the state, such as 25 on 17 Dec in Decatur (JRL), 30 on 18 Dec in Warren (JS), 25 on 10 Jan in Lee (JLF), and 18 on 29 Feb in Woodbury (GLV).

**Townsend's Solitaire:** All: one on the Taylor County CBC and one on 21–22 Jan at Waterman Twp. O'Brien (\*LAS, DTh).

**Hermit Thrush:** As in the recent past, Lake Ahquabi SP was the hotspot, with a peak of 3 on 18 Feb (JS). The only reports past the CBC period were singles: 7 Jan at Saylorville Res (SJD), 10 Jan in Polk (AB), and an unusual northern Iowa report on 16–17 Jan at Spencer (LAS).

**American Robin:** Wintering and the peak count were 500 at Little River A Decatur (JRL). Migrants started returning early with 100 males, some singing, on 1 Feb in Des Moines (RIC).

**Varied Thrush:** One found on the Bremer Co. CBC was last reported on 3 Feb (RIC, JG, BSc). Others included one on the Eldora-Union CBC, one in the Stilwell's backyard on 27 Dec–11 Jan (SAS, KRW, RIA/PHA, MPr), and one on 19 Feb in Spencer (LAS), which, with the Hermit Thrush, made for two unusual

Turdidae species in Lee Schoenewe's backyard.

**Gray Catbird:** Singles were reported from the Andalusia, Saylorville, and Taylor Co. CBCs.

**Northern Mockingbird:** All: one on 24 Dec in Union (JG), 2 on 9 Jan in Louisa (JLF), one on 10 Jan in Des Moines (JLF), and 3 on 14 Jan in Muscatine (BSc).

**Brown Thrasher:** All: one on 17–22 Dec in Marion Linn (BSc).

**American Pipit:** All: one on 1 Dec at Ada Hayden P (WO) and one on the Red Rock Res CBC.

**Cedar Waxwing:** This species was well represented on CBCs and virtually unreported here: the only report past the CBC period was 150 on 4 Feb at Rathbun Res (RLC).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** There was a peak of 3 on 18 Dec at the Hawkeye WA (CRE). Others included one on 10 Jan in Lee (JLF), one on 15 Jan at Decorah (DeC), 3 on 4 Feb at Rathbun Res (RLC), 3 on 5 Feb at Lake of Three Fires Taylor (SJD, JG), and one on 18 Feb at Lake Ahquabi SP (JS).

**Spotted Towhee:** All: CBC reports from southeast Clayton and Iowa City plus one on 15 Jan in Warren (JS).

**Eastern Towhee:** CBC produced all three reports.

**LARK BUNTING:** A report was referred to the Records Committee.

**Savannah Sparrow:** An unusually late report came from northern Iowa: one on 1 Jan at Elk Creek M Worth (PH-details) where it was "seen up close with expensive optical equipment."

**Fox Sparrow:** There were reports through mid-December from Woodbury, Warren, and Story. One on 26 Feb at Cardinal M Winneshiek was early (EB).

**Song Sparrow:** The only report away from northern or eastern Iowa was 3 on 7 Jan in Grundy (MPr).



**Swamp Sparrow:** There were no reports after the CBC period.

**White-throated Sparrow:** The most by far was of 52 on 10 Jan at Jester P Polk (AB). One remained through the period at Mason City (RGo, CJF); the other post-CBC period reports were of 1–5 from Johnson (DP), Polk (BE), Poweshiek (DK), Appanoose (RLC), and Warren (SSP).

**Harris's Sparrow:** Wintering was one through the period at Algona Kossuth (MCK); the only other mid-winter reports were of one on 7 Jan in Grundy (MPr) and 2 on 21 Jan in Ida (WO). Early, evidently, were 7 on 17 Feb in Polk (AB) and one on 18 Feb in Polk (DTh).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** The only report after the CBC period was one on 6 Jan in Woodbury (GLV).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** An "Oregon" was in Ames on 17 Dec (JJD).

**Lapland Longspur:** There were 15 reports from throughout the season and the state, including southern Iowa. The peak counts were 200 on 1 Dec in Clayton (DAK), a peak of 200 on 21 Jan at Hawkeye WA Johnson (CRE, CJC, DP), and 1,000 on 22 Feb in Woodbury (GLV).

**Snow Bunting:** Small numbers made it to southern Iowa such as 4 on 2 Dec in Lee (JLF) and 5 on 4 Feb in Appanoose (RLC). The biggest counts by far were of 200 on 1 Jan in Worth (PH) and 750 on 7 Jan in Cerro Gordo (PH).

**Red-winged Blackbird:** Birds remained at scattered locations statewide, such as 30 on 1 Jan at Hanlontown M Worth (PH), 90 on 8 Jan in Jasper (DTh), and 30 on 14 Jan at Cone M (BSc). Numbers then increased, with 120 on 21 Jan at Owego Wetlands Woodbury (BFH) and 200 on 30 Jan at Errington M Polk (BE). Migrants appeared by the thousands by the end of the period.

**Eastern Meadowlark:** There were 2 identified by call on 20 Feb at two

Ringgold locations (KLP, SSP).

**Western Meadowlark:** Interesting were reports of singing birds in late Dec–early Jan (JRL, GLV), inspired, evidently, by the mid-winter thaw. Two birds in a flock of 23 were identified by call on 18 Dec in Polk (JB).

**Meadowlark sp:** High counts included 30 on 21 Jan at Rathbun Res (RLC) and 15 on 25 Jan in Poweshiek (DK). Appreciated was the fact that virtually all reports of meadowlarks were accompanied by details of vocalizations or noted that they were silent.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** Bizarre was an adult male on 21 Jan in Pocahontas (LAS-details).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** The only reports were from CBCs: two each at southeast Webster, Rathbun, and Shenandoah.

**Common Grackle:** Lingering were singles on 12 Dec in Cerro Gordo (CJF) and 3 Jan in Hardin (MPr).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** What are evidently Iowa's most northerly wintering birds, 50 were found again this season in Warren (AMJ).

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** There was one on 1 Jan in Worth (PH).

**BRAMBLING:** A first state record bird was photographed at a feeder in rural Linn from 1–21 Jan (John Hauch-photo fide BSc).

**Purple Finch:** Peak counts included 32 on 31 Jan at two O'Brien locations (JB) and 30 on 3 Jan at Hooper WA Warren (JS). There were nine other reports of 1–6 birds from throughout the season and the state, about average for recent years.

**Common Redpoll:** The only report was from the Ames CBC.

**Pine Siskin:** The Sheldon Cemetery O'Brien was the hotspot, with 40 on 31 Dec (JB, JG) and 25 there on 21 Jan (DTh). The only other reports were one on 2 Dec at Carolyn Fischer's Mason City

## CONTRIBUTORS

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Danny Akers	DAK	Garnavillo	Mike Johnston	MWJ	Waterloo
Ried and Pam Allen	RIA/PHA	West Des Moines	Matt Kenne	MCK	Algona
*Bob Barry		Missouri Valley	Darwin Koenig	DK	Ankeny
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John Bissell	JB	Grimes	Jeff Livingston	JRL	Davis City
Aaron Brees	AB	Des Moines	Jeff Nichols	DJN	Boone
Alan Brown	AIB	Cedar Falls	Bob Norris	BN	Des Moines
Dennis Carter	DeC	Decorah	Kelly Norris	KN	Bedford
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Stephen J. Dinsmore	SJD	Ames	Diana Pesek	DP	Cedar Rapids
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Steve Freed	SMF	Milan, IL	Sharon Stilwell	SAS	West Des Moines
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Jay Gilliam	JG	Norwalk	Richard Trieff	RTr	Indianola
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Ann Johnson	AMJ	Norwalk	Walter Zuurdeeg	WMZ	Davenport

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feeder, one on 12 Dec in Sioux City (GLV), and 3 on 8 Jan in Indianola Warren (JS).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** Pushing the edge of its range was one on 20 Dec in *Scott* (WMZ) at the edge of the species' Iowa range; the few other reports were from *Johnson* and *Lee*.

In addition, reports by Jason Paulios, Jon Strong, and Rod Schmidt were not individually cited but were incorporated into species summaries.

## COMMENT

Thanks to all the contributors who made this seasonal report possible, and especially those who submitted their report on-line, greatly reducing the likelihood of errors while making my life much easier. I would also like to thank son John for his careful cross-checking of data.

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*Canada x Snow Goose hybrid, Ankeny, Polk,  
11 December 2005. Photograph by Stephen  
J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Black-legged Kittiwake, Saylorville Res,  
Polk, 2 December 2005. Photograph by  
Aaron Brees, Des Moines, IA.*



*Northern Saw-whet Owl, Ledges SP, Boone,  
11 February 2006. Photograph by Stephen J.  
Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Northern Shrike, north of Ames, Story, 10 January 2006. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Snow Bunting, Saylorville Res, Polk, 29 October 2005. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*



*Pine Siskins, Sheldon Cemetery, O'Brien, 31 December 2005. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.*

# Iowa Snowy Owls, 2005–2006

Paul Hertzell

There were nineteen independent reports of Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) in Iowa during the 2005–2006 season of owl movements. Beginning with a report from Emmet County on 25 November, and ending with a bird photographed in Cerro Gordo County on 25 April, it was the most reports since the 21 reported in 1993–1994.

Numbered chronologically, these nineteen reports of Snowy Owls are illustrated in Figure 1. Contrary to historical distributions (Kent and Dinsmore 1996), owls avoided the northern third of the state for most of the season, possibly because of unusually early, deep snow that persisted through December in that part of the state. The only three owls found there were the first bird of the season, which occurred in November before the snow, the last bird, which occurred in April long after the snow, and one other on 7 December that was not found again. Twelve reports (63%) were from the middle third of Iowa, and four reports (21%) were from the southern three tiers of counties.

In November, the first two Snowy Owls were found as part of the fall reporting season, and the last three occurred in March and April as part of the spring season. Without an ability to track individual birds, it is difficult to judge whether any of these five birds were among the fourteen reported during the winter months, but it seems likely. So, while the data presented here are of distinct reports at distinct locations, the total of nineteen reports may represent fewer actual birds. For example, the last bird observed, marked Figure 1.19 on the map, an almost pure white adult male found in late April by biologist Carol Schutte in Cerro Gordo County, may have been the same individual marked Figure 1.18 on the map and seen by many in March in Hamilton County not many miles due south of Schutte's bird. Except in a few cases (most notably the Boone and Hamilton County reports), the owls did not show much site fidelity and were not often found by others after initial discovery. The sequence of sightings numbered Figure 1.2, 1.6, and 1.11 may have been a single individual continuing to wander southward.

Even if some reports were of birds seen elsewhere in the state, the total of nineteen reports taken as a frequency of detection fits well with the pattern of irruption over the last decade and with this season, which demonstrates a significant irruption of Snowy Owls in the upper Midwest. This pattern is only mildly apparent in Iowa, in part because not all owls found are reported to the IOU. However, if the annual Iowa numerical totals are presented in a context with the Minnesota totals, it is easy to see that the outer ripples in the cycle of irruptions are detectable in the Iowa data (Figure 2).

It is evident that these irruptions of Snowy Owls in the Midwest occur every four or five years. Over about the last decade, the mild spikes in the Iowa data appear in the 1996–1997, 2001–2002, and 2005–2006 seasons, each of which was a major irruption season in Minnesota. In these seasons, Iowa averages about 10% of the Minnesota totals. The 2005–2006 Minnesota data is not yet published, but the editor of *The Loon* expects an approximate final total of 130 Snowy Owls (A. X. Hertzell, pers. comm.).

Not all of the fourteen Iowa observations that occurred during the winter season (Dec–Feb) were reported to Bob Cecil, editor of the annual winter season summary article in *Iowa Bird Life* (IBL), upon which researchers depend for accurate historical infor-

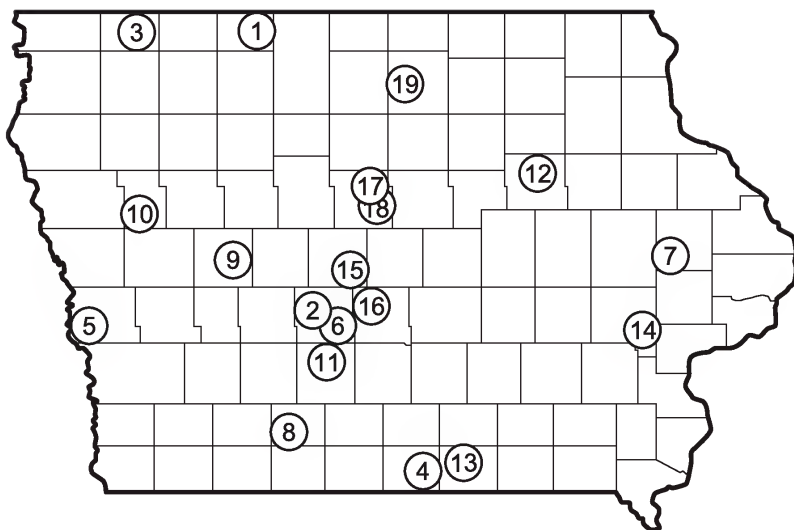


Figure 1. Snowy Owl chronologic occurrence by county in Iowa, 2005–2006. (1) Emmet, 25 Nov; (2) Dallas, 30 Nov; (3) Osceola, 7 Dec; (4) Wayne, 11 Dec; (5) Harrison, 14 Dec; (6) Dallas, 15 Dec; (7) Jones, 17 Dec; (8) Union, 24 Dec; (9) Carroll, 26 Dec; (10) Ida, 26 Dec; (11) Madison, 26 Dec; (12) Black Hawk, 31 Dec; (13) Appanoose, 9 Jan; (14) Johnson, 20 Jan; (15) Boone, 26 Jan; (16) Polk, 21 Feb; (17) Hamilton, 2 Mar; (18) Hamilton, 6 Mar; (19) Cerro Gordo, 25 Apr.

mation. In fact, only five of the owls were reported directly to him, or about 36% of the strictly winter season Snowy Owls included here. This is disappointing, because that total probably would not indicate that 2005–2006 had been an irruption year. Also, some of the other nine owls were either found by IOU members or reported to IOU members, who must know it is a principal function of the IOU to gather and preserve information on Iowa’s birdlife. Although most sightings eventually were announced on the IOU-supported listserv, IA-Birds, what contributors may not know is field report editors do not have time to sift through the listserv archives in search of every bird deserving mention in the permanent record. Instead, the editors rely on members to submit information directly, through the field report process. Expecting this season might involve an irruption, and fearing that many reports would not make it directly to Cecil, I kept track of all Snowy Owls reports that I became aware of during the season. This article uses those reports in which (1) the contributor of the information was a contributor to the *IBL* field report process, (2) the report was conveyed by Iowa DNR personnel or a field biologist, (3) the bird was subsequently found by others as a result of the initial report, or (4) the bird’s photo appeared in print (e.g., Figure 1.14, *Lone Tree Reporter* [Johnson], 25 Jan 2006). Several additional reports did not satisfy any of these criteria and were not included.



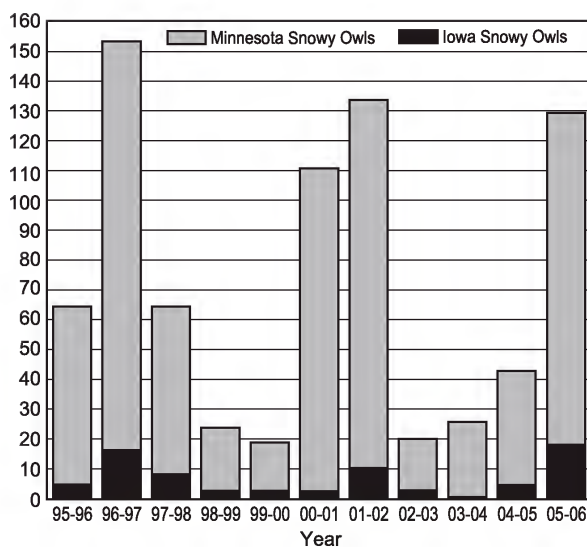


Figure 2. Snowy Owls (No.) in Minnesota and Iowa, Winters 1995–2006 (Cecil et al. 1995–2006; Svingen et al. 1995–2005).

Although the total of nineteen reports used here is the highest total in over ten years, and coincides with an irruption in Minnesota, it is far short of historical record totals. During the “great Snowy Owl invasion” of 1976–1977, a final count of 206 sightings in 76 counties was submitted by Gladys Black (Halmi 1977).

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# Northern Hawk Owl in Worth County

Paul Hertzel

Iowa's second recorded occurrence of Northern Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*) was a prolonged affair for the tiny town of Manly, in Worth County, during the winter of 2004–2005 (Figure 1). First recorded on video in Manly on Christmas Eve, 2004, the bird stayed faithfully until 2 April 2005, never wandering more than one-half mile from where it was first discovered.

The winter of 2004–2005 was remarkable for the magnitude of the invasion of northern owls across the upper Midwest. Boreal, Great Gray, and Northern Hawk Owls were recorded unusually early, and in record numbers, particularly in Minnesota. In the journal of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, Kim Eckert wrote, "While previous winter owl irruptions could be documented by just one or two articles in this journal, the same coverage could not adequately describe the scope of this event" (Eckert 2005). The editors plan a series of nine articles.

Descriptions of the unprecedented activity were noted early by Iowans, prompting many birders to begin watching in earnest for wandering birds. On weekday afternoons in January and February, I routinely extended my drive home from work to use that last hour of daylight to search for owls. Usually that meant cruising the Claybanks portion of the Winnebago River, where Reid Allen and Pam Allen found two Great Gray Owls in 1997 (Cecil 1997), or driving north along the Greenbelt section of the Shellrock River and Wilkinson Park, where there is habitat that looks like it was planted with Northern Hawk Owls in mind.

On 14 February, Valentine's Day, I made an extra loop north through Worth County, nearly reaching the Minnesota border, but found little of note, and headed home south along U.S. Highway 65. Then, at Manly, I noticed the silhouette of a hawk owl on the power line just south of Highway 9. The profile — blunt head, tapered body with long tail, hunched over as it peered down into the grass below — was unmistakable. The light was fading, but in binoculars, its diagnostic facial features, head stripes, and streaked breast were easy to see at such close range.

From the Casey's convenience store on the east side of the highway, I called Rita Goranson, and then returned to stand watch under the bird. It flew a short distance to a



Figure 1. Northern Hawk Owl, Manly, IA, Worth, 23 February 2005. Photograph by Harsha Jayawardena, Mason City, IA.

utility pole, then to a low fence about 100 feet away. Frank Hodak, the Manly chief of police, stopped by to see what I was doing, but seemed satisfied when I showed him a bird not quite like any he had seen. After about 15 minutes, Rita arrived, and we stood together on the roadside and watched the bird, believing at any minute it would fly away never to be seen again. In fact, it began to work its way west along Highway 9, flying short distances from pole to pole, just as Carolyn Fischer arrived. The three of us followed the owl about one-fourth mile down the road, and in the dim light of early evening, left it hunting a small grass field on the south side.

At home, I posted word of the owl on the listserv and made a few phone calls, but over night I worried the owl would leave the area. I thought it would fly farther west in a continuation of its movements that night. However, the next morning Rita refound the bird almost exactly where it had been the night before, and Curt Nelson and other birders were able to see it at first light.

Over the next few weeks, we came to realize the owl had chosen to spend its winter in Manly, and we gradually learned its habits were predictable. Rita, Carolyn, and I split time monitoring the owl's presence, and with the help of many other birders were able to find its favorite roosts and the limits of its chosen winter range. It had little interest in exploring the mostly dirt countryside, preferring small weedy patches along roadsides, the local ball field, and the railroad tracks. Except for an occasional hour or two spent hunting a farmyard one-half mile west of Manly, it was never seen outside of the city limits. During morning and mid-day, it preferred to hunt city yards and vacant lots, or along the railroad tracks that ran through the heart of the city. Twice, during the day, I watched it venture to the rural edges of Manly where it was quickly found by crows. On both occasions, the crows mobbed the owl, pursuing it in retreat to its favorite evergreen roost in Marie Wemken's backyard on a sheltered, residential alley. Late on most days, against the setting sun and with the crows gone to roost, the owl moved undisturbed back to the exposed perches along the highway and at the edge of town. In late February, an inspection of the ground under that evergreen roost revealed approximately 40 pellets.

Through the end of February and into March, hundreds of birders made the drive to Worth County to see the owl. Nearly every day, Rita or Carolyn or both could be found following the owl's daily movements and recording the locations for publishing on a web site. Most Manly residents we encountered in these nearly daily visits were friendly and helpful. One morning, after checking all the usual spots, then driving a circular route through the city in vain, I encountered a young mother driving a van filled with small children. She stopped and rolled down the window. "Are you looking for the owl? It's right there." She pointed to a deciduous branch, arching over the pavement about a block away.

Other residents stood and chatted with us on most days, often relating some personal story about the owl. One particularly interesting story was told to Rita by Dan Yezek, who said he had captured the owl on video over the Christmas holiday, 45 days before it was noticed by me on Valentine's Day. Rita went to his home, viewed the video, and to her astonishment, watched the owl in Yezek's front yard on Elmore Street, on frames dated 24 December 2004 by the video recorder. The very next scene was Yezek's daughter unwrapping Christmas presents.

The owl persisted in Manly, faithful to its routine of hunting the city during the day and the highway in the evening until mid-March. On the 16th of that month, a group including Paul Lehman of New Jersey, Edge Wade and Della Rhoades of Missouri, and Jan

Lovell of Clear Lake, joined Carolyn Fischer and me in watching the owl hunt from the wires along Highway 65 as the sun set in the west. We began to disperse, the bird disappeared into the dark, and the following day, it could not be found. We searched for the next four days, wondering if it had changed its routine, but suspecting it had left or possibly died. On several occasions, I had watched the bird leave a low perch and fly directly across a road at bumper-level. Once, Ann Johnson and I watched it cross Highway 9 so close to an approaching truck, I thought for certain we were witnesses to its final moments. So, in the days following March 16th, our searches included walking the ditches east and west along Highway 9, looking for remains. Eventually, we gave up the search and reported to the listserv that the owl had left.

On the evening of 28 March, driving through Manly and approaching the intersection of Highways 65 and 9, I watched the tops of the utility poles out of habit. The hawk owl was perched at a high point on the east side of the road. Absent for twelve days, it had reappeared and resumed its prior habits. We tracked it for another five days with the last sighting taking place in the deciduous trees behind the Manly firehouse on the afternoon of 2 April.

I did not try to determine the sex of the Worth County Northern Hawk Owl. Apparently, there are no reliable plumage criteria known for sexing (Pyle 1997). However, aging this species is straightforward if the tail and/or spread wing can be examined closely. With so many good, prolonged views and crystal clear, full-frame photographs, it seemed like this would be possible. So, I began to discuss the evidence with other Iowa birders, wrote two ornithologists whose expertise is in northern owls, and used the listserv to ask for spread wing shots from those who had taken photos of the owl.

The initial consensus was the owl seemed to be an immature bird. James Duncan (1998), author of "Northern Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*)," the species account in *Birds of North America*, agreed that the bird was probably hatched in 2004. His opinion was based, in part, on the narrow widths of many of the flight feathers, and he sent some spread wing photos and tail photos of both juveniles and adults to use for comparison. A few critics, however, thought they saw features in conflict with that analysis, casting doubt on what we were seeing in the photos collected. Then, two remarkable digital photos were sent to me, one from Robert and Linda Scarth and another from Tim McKone of Mason City. The Scarth photo shows the sitting bird spreading its wing as if in response to a request for its wing to be spread (Figure 2). Both photos clearly show the bird's secondary flight feathers were all of uniform age.

The secondary molt of hatching year birds does not begin until the first winter season is over. Usually, in that spring following the first winter, the molt starts from four locations, S1, S5, about S10, and S15, ending in September or early October with as many as six or seven secondary feathers still retained as juvenal until the following molt season when they are the first to be replaced (Duncan 1998). So, secondaries of irregular age indicate a bird in a year after its hatching year, and secondaries of uniform age, like the Worth County owl, indicate a juvenile in its hatching year.

It is likely this owl was the southernmost occurrence of the species in the United States during the winter of 2004–2005. To put this event in the context of the irruption, of 475 Northern Hawk Owls recorded in Minnesota during this time period (three times the previous record), only four were found in the southern half of the state, and none were south of the Twin Cities (Svingen and Nicoletti 2005). The southernmost individual found in Minnesota was in Chippewa County, over 100 miles from the Iowa border. Only



Figure 2. Northern Hawk Owl, Manly, IA, Worth, 16 February 2005. This photograph by Robert and Linda Scarth, Cedar Rapids, IA, shows that the secondary flight feathers are all of uniform age, which conclusively ages the bird as hatched in 2004 (so it is a first-winter bird).

two were recorded in North Dakota, three were in Michigan, and ten were recorded in Wisconsin. The first date of discovery of the Iowa bird, 24 December, was four days after a North American Christmas Bird Count (CBC) record of 42 Hawk Owls counted on the Sax-Zim CBC in northcentral Minnesota (Svingen and Nicoletti 2005).

The period from 24 December to 2 April is exactly 100 days. In that time, the owl was observed always within a 1-mile diameter circle centered at the intersection of Highways 65 and 9. These details of the owl's visit are remarkably similar to the details of another Northern Hawk Owl that spent the winter of 2004–2005 out of range, in eastern Wisconsin. That bird was first found on 26 December at Harrington Beach State Park on the shores of Lake Michigan (Mueller 2005), and stayed in a small area until 26 March (Bill Mueller, pers. comm.), a period of 93 days. Harrington Beach State Park is at nearly the same latitude as Manly, Iowa, only about 12 miles farther north. These arrival dates, the extended stay, and winter site fidelity are also similar to those of Iowa's only other confirmed Northern Hawk Owl. That bird was found on Christmas Day 1981 (Myers 1982), and remained near the intersection of Highways 63 and 218 in Waterloo for 62 days, finally departing on 25 February 1982 (Kent 1982).

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# Magnificent Frigatebird in Johnson County

Ken Lowder

At about 3 P.M. on the afternoon of 4 September, I received a telephone call from my friend, Troy Kelsay. Troy said he had seen a Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) while boating with his family on Lake McBride near Solon, IA at about 10 A.M. Troy described the bird and it seemed highly likely that his report was accurate. He mentioned that he had maneuvered his pontoon boat extremely close to the perched bird. He also said that the bird had left its perch a few times to catch fish, but always returned to the same tall, dead tree on the lakeshore. Troy agreed to accompany me out to the area where he saw the bird. It had rained during the day but by the time we arrived, the rain had mostly stopped. It was warm and hazy. By about 4:15 P.M., we relocated the bird in the same snag where Troy had last seen it. The bird was clearly a frigatebird.

It appeared exhausted, allowing very close approach directly underneath its perch and it did not flush. I immediately called local birders who passed the word along and in less than an hour, about twenty-five birders were treated to this bird. It was likely a wind-blown visitor, courtesy of Hurricane Katrina.

James Huntington, Mike Dooley, and I went up the shore of the lake searching for a better view of the front of the bird. In spite of the backlighting, the bird's black throat was clearly seen along with blotchy white patches along the sides of the breast. We therefore concluded that our bird was a subadult female Magnificent Frigatebird.

Several birders came out at dawn on the next day and found the bird perched in the same location. Again, it allowed close approach by boat where the front of the bird was viewed in excellent light and many obtained good photographs (Figure 1). It was at this time that what appeared to be dried, matted blood was noted on the bird's breast. I am sure many, including myself, concluded that the bird would not survive long.

To my surprise, I later learned from Chris Edwards that at about 10:15 A.M., the bird left the perch and flew for about 45 minutes over the lake and then circled higher and was last seen flying west accompanied by Turkey Vultures. Despite searching in the near-



Figure 1. Magnificent Frigatebird, fifth state record, Lake Macbride, 4 September 2005. Photograph by James Scheib, Iowa City, IA.





Figure 2. Magnificent Frigatebird, fifth state record, Lake Macbride, 5 September 2005. Photograph by Aaron Brees, Des Moines, IA.

by Hawkeye Wildlife Area, the bird was never relocated.

Aaron Brees took several photographs of the bird in flight that provided additional details allowing the IOU Records Committee to confirm the identification of Magnificent Frigatebird (Figure 2).

A second frigatebird at the Hawkeye Wildlife Area in Johnson County on 18 September was reported to the Records Committee by Dean Colton of Solon, IA. This second bird's head was noted to be white. Therefore, Johnson County had not one, but two frigatebirds in September 2006. The first bird was accepted as a magnificent, the second was accepted as frigatebird spp. as there was insufficient evidence to confirm its species.

During this same period, at least three other reports of Magnificent Frigatebird in the Midwest were noted: on 1 September at Eagle Creek Park near Indianapolis, IN; on 2 September at Downer's Grove, IL, a suburb of Chicago; and on 5 September at the Lake Erie shoreline near Cleveland, OH.

The Lake McBride sighting of Magnificent Frigatebird is the fifth record of this species occurring in Iowa. The three most recent sightings all occurred in late September and early October 1988 following Hurricane Gilbert (Kent and Dinsmore 1996).

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# **In Memoriam: Beth Proescholdt, 13 May 1922–10 February 2006**

*Robert I. Cecil*

It is difficult to imagine how so much passion, wisdom, kindness, and beauty could be packed into such a diminutive being, but for generations of Iowa birders, Beth epitomized all of those qualities, and more. In addition to her role as wife and mother of five children, including Mark, another one of Iowa's favorite birders, she left a lasting legacy of fond memories with us and a wealth of information to future students of Iowa's birds. As noted by Eugene and Eloise Armstrong, two of her closest friends and birding colleagues, her pride and joy was the Grammer Grove Hawk Watch, where an outing 16 years ago became an annual undertaking that not only provided data but an afternoon meeting place for scores of birders. There have been 33,318 raptors of 17 species seen since its beginning.

Due to their long friendship and partnership with Beth, Eugene and Eloise have many memories to recall. Some of their favorites include the day a Rough-legged Hawk came over and Beth wished aloud that she could see that bird again, when, as if it had heard, it turned and circled back over them. Eloise added that each day a different raptor was her favorite, or maybe even every time when a special one flew over. She said there was seldom a dull moment as there was always a lot of good conversation about birds, family, politics, friends, and nature's curiosities. And then there was the story of that October day in 1997 when there was eight inches of heavy wet snow. When Armstrongs decided to come anyway, Beth thought they were crazy, "but what the heck," she said, "all birders are a little crazy." While they all sat with their feet in the snow, they had a remarkable 157 raptors that included 72 Bald Eagles, three Golden Eagles, 69 Red-tailed-hawks, four Red-shouldered Hawks, two Rough-legged Hawks, and others. But hawks weren't the only birds she watched: other highlights included a Black-throated Blue Warbler that appeared at the water pan in their backyard and an adult male Painted Bunting on 12 May 2001 in Marshall County (Proescholdt 2002).

Steve Dinsmore recalled making several trips to Grammer Grove in 1996 to watch raptors with Beth and others. "On my first trip, the visibility was a bit limited because of tree growth near the viewing area. When I returned a couple of weeks later, it was much better, and I asked Beth why. Her response was that a very local windstorm has passed near the site, removing some unwanted trees. Seems like this was a regular pattern in subsequent falls." He also recalls chase trips with Beth and Mark in his early years of birding in Iowa. "Because I was a teenager, an added benefit was Beth's motherly attitude, which always guaranteed lots of snacks for the trip!"

Russ Widner, until recently a near neighbor, noted that he was indebted to many Iowans for help with our wonderful avocation, but that Beth (and Mark) were clearly his



*Beth Proescholdt*

Iowa birding instructors. “We spent many hours traveling and birding, and we covered many subjects including the Iowa economy and raising children as well as birds and birding. But the lesson that seems most important to me was set by their example. And it was to enjoy the journey, the quest, whether or not the birds cooperated.”

Ann Johnson and Paul Hertzell recalled the Spring 2005 IOU Meeting, where Beth was presented the first award for Outstanding Contributions to Iowa Field Ornithology by the Records Committee. Although her health prevented her attendance to receive the award personally, son Mark accepted on her behalf. In true Beth form, she expressed her pleasure but felt there were so many others worthy of the honor.

Reid and Pam Allen enjoyed so many, many fond memories of Beth that it was hard to select one, but knew that her greatest legacy was her very warm, caring, gentle spirit — whenever you were with her, she made you feel very special!

Our lives will be diminished by Beth’s passing, but we were so enriched by her time here with us. We have all lived in a better world because of the time she shared with us.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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## Birding Hancock County

*Rita Goranson*

Birding in Hancock County is a never ending task that is pure joy! There are major marsh/water areas: Pilot Knob State Park; a river with lots of habitat; and Twin Lakes, Crystal Lake, and several smaller areas that are great bird habitats.

Although it is hard to choose from the above, my favorite area is **Eagle Lake** (Figure 1). This lake is predominantly a lake for fishing and hunting, versus boating or water skiing. It offers a large marsh area and a great woodland area to bird, in addition to the water area. On Highway 18, five miles west of Garner and one mile west of a village called Duncan, there is a sign on Lake Avenue that points to Eagle Lake, which is a right hand turn to the north. From this corner, it is two miles to the entrance of the park and the west marsh access. The entrance on the right meanders into the area before the actual parking lot. At the lot there is a wonderful 14-foot high deck that overlooks the marsh. This platform has ample room for scopes and provides great views of much of the water. Particularly in the spring, this is a good spot to view the Red-necked or Western Grebes that are quite often seen at the lake. Black Terns are generally here all summer. Virginia Rail and Sora can be heard, bitterns fly by, Scarlet Tanagers sing, and warblers flit in the trees on a good day in spring.

The picnic area to the north has restrooms and is a nice area to bird the edges for warblers and other migrants. The woodland area to the south meanders through the trees and to a boardwalk that is small but sufficient to call in rails, see bitterns, or hear Sandhill Cranes in the springtime. Continued walking across a bridge and along the trail leads to an extensive but narrow woodland that has many migrant species in the spring. Barred

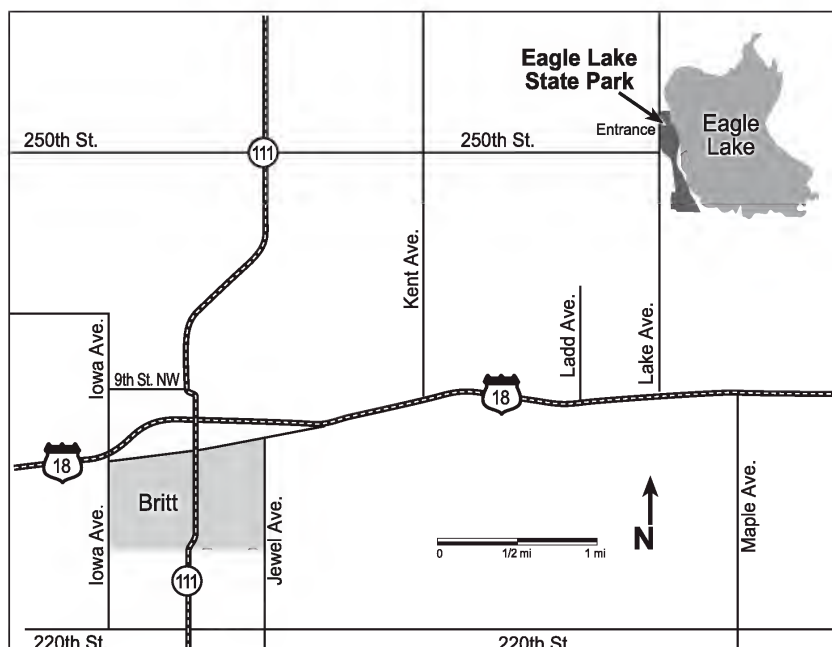


Figure 1. Eagle Lake, Hancock.

and Great Horned Owls live there year around and warblers are plentiful in the fall. It borders the marsh and marsh birds can be heard and seen while searching the woods.

Go back to Lake Avenue, take a right turn out, which is north, to the next intersection and go east not quite one mile on 260th Street to a road that ends at the north side of the marsh area. This is another access to the marsh. There is a parking lot at the end of the road and to the west a small dike to walk on. Generally this is where there are Black-crowned Night-Herons as well as occasional Common Moorhens. There is an area to the east of the dike that is private property and only the very edge of the marsh can be walked to check for shorebirds, marsh rails, bitterns, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and this is where a Sprague's Pipit was found. Cows are pastured in this area by mid-June.

A side trip at this point is a trip to Eagle Flats. Travel back to Lake Avenue and turn to the north; at one mile, turn east on 270th Street. At Maple Avenue, make a turn north onto Maple and go past the area known as Eagle Flats. It is a wetland consisting of three or four ponds, depending on the rains, and prairie grasses mostly on the east side of the road. There is a parking lot on 270th Street. Bitterns, waterfowl, and sparrows can be found here in the spring. North of the ponds, some small wetlands tend to be mud flats during most of the spring, and shorebirds including dowitchers and avocets frequently use this area. There are bits and pieces of additional IA DNR areas north to 280th Street.

Another favorite place to bird in Hancock County is **Pilot Knob State Park** (Figure 2). It contains 700 acres of recreational habitat with a 15-acre pond among established woodlands and unusual birds for the area. There is an entrance, which is 205th Avenue, on the north side of Highway 9, four miles east and one mile south of Forest City. This road ends at the entrance of the park, where the road intersects with 340th Street. The

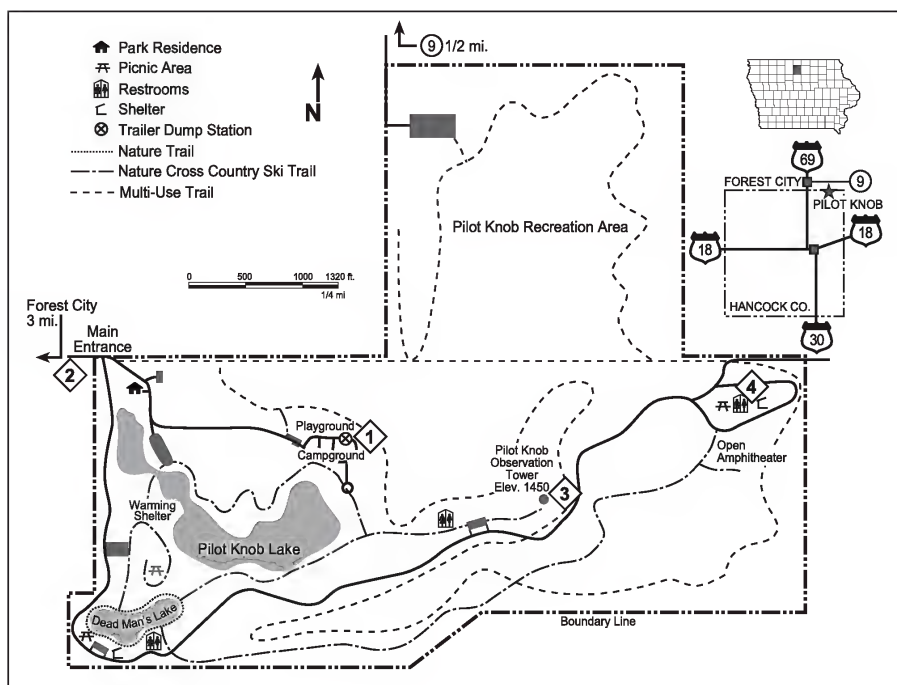


Figure 2. Pilot Knob State Park: (1) campground, (2) main entrance, (3) Pilot Knob Observation Tower, (4) one-way side road.

north side of 340th is Winnebago County and the south side, which is most of the park, is Hancock County. At the entrance there is a road to the left before entering the park, which winds around to the ranger house, office, and campground (Figure 2.1). The campground is a good place to start a search for birds. Drive into the area and around each picnic or camping area to watch and listen for spring migrants, especially warblers and flycatchers. A Pileated Woodpecker has been seen most often by the camping area. There are restrooms here and throughout the park.

When finished with the campground, take the main entrance (Figure 2.2) into the park and slowly bird the length of the park. There are several picnic areas, some with shelters. The first picnic area with a shelter on the left has an access path to the lake in the woods. Follow this path around the lake to find nearly all of the warblers that we anticipate in migration in Iowa, along with other spring thrushes, flycatchers, vireos, and sparrows.

About midway along the main road is a larger parking lot on the left and a short trail that takes you to the tower (Figure 2.3) at the high point of Pilot Knob. The tower can be climbed and the view at the top is panoramic, with three towns visible in the distance, along with the entire countryside. Hawk watches up here can be very productive in peak migration because of the Winnebago River west and south of this area.

Near the east end of the main road of the park, there is a one-way side road (Figure 2.4) that goes into the woods to a picnic area with shelters. Driving this road and listening lets you know if the Acadian Flycatcher is back or if the Cerulean Warblers are nest-



ing here again.

Just outside the park entrance, on the left, is a trail that leads back into the park and travels east to west exiting at the main entrance of Pilot Knob. However, about one-third of the way along this trail is a path to the right, which loops around the woods to the north and arrives at a pond and then back to the trail again. It is a good walk with many woodland birds and the marsh area around the pond is good for sparrows. This area can be accessed from the north off of Highway 9 where there is a recreational sign that points to a recreation area and parking area on 210th Avenue. This lot is for horse trailers and such, though anyone may use the area and gain access to the pond quickly if the trail at the parking lot is occupied. This area is great for warblers and flycatchers in the spring and fall.

A side trip near the park is the **Gabrielson Wildlife Management Area** (WMA) woods on B14 and **Torkelson Pits** south of Pilot Knob on R70 and then east on 305th Street. Gabrielson WMA is a favorite spot for turkey and woodland birds and Torkelson Pits beside the Winnebago River can have grebes, shorebirds, and most any species in migration.

The back side of **Ventura Marsh** in Hancock County is the third favorite spot and a good place to bird in the spring and fall. It is primitive in that, other than parking lots, there are no maintained paths, no lookouts, and no amenities. It is a marsh with potential for good waterfowl and marsh species. There is a parking lot at the east side of this area, which is on West Lake Street, one mile west of the town of Ventura. The road becomes 250th Avenue and continues to the marsh access at the border of Hancock County. There is a second parking lot further west on the same road. From the first parking lot, walk along an unused service road. The shrubs along the path are used by sparrows, flycatchers, and warblers. Along the edges of the marsh, rails can be heard or seen.

Walk in as far as possible from either parking area to access the back ponds that, before the vegetation becomes overgrown in the summer, have mud flats used by shorebirds. The shrubs in the area are good for passerines. The ponds are in the middle of the section and have pelicans, cormorants, gulls, terns, waterfowl, herons, egrets, and bitterns in the spring and fall.

The drawback to this area, besides it being sometimes difficult to reach the inner sanctum, is that it is one of our best local spots for ticks. There is access to the south part of the marsh from 240th Street. Take B14 south of Ventura and then right on 237th which winds into 240th. There is a parking lot on this south road. Again, though, it generally means bushwhacking a path into the marsh, and it is possible to get bogged down in the marsh itself, if not careful.

The other sites in the county are not listed as favorites but are well worth the effort to check and can be very productive for birds.

**Crystal Lake** is on James Avenue, south of B14 and west of Forest City, or north on B14 from Britt, Iowa and Highway 18. The lake has an access on the east side, north of the downtown area. There are restrooms, picnic areas, and a good view of the lake for scoping and scanning for waterfowl, gulls, and terns. North of the wooded area on James Avenue there is a small pond created by a dike that is just above the lake. Once the pond has thawed out in the spring it is worth checking for all sorts of species. **Crystal Lake WMA**, situated east of Crystal Lake on 320th Street, can be productive. Waterfowl in spring, a few shorebirds if the water level is down, and marsh birds make the WMA area interesting. The area can be scoped from the vehicle at the parking lot.



**Meredith Marsh** at the curve of B14, which is west of Forest City, is a likely spot for LeConte's and Sharp-tailed Sparrows. The wooded area to the west of the dike is a good spot for warblers and thrushes. The pond itself, especially if low, can contain many shorebirds in spring and fall. The Forest City Waste Site, on B14 just west and south of the Winnebago plant at Forest City can have grebes, waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, and terns in migration.

The **Twin Lakes** area in the south part of the county is a combination of two lakes and a marsh. The road around the lake starts at Nash Avenue off of B63 west of Goodell. The road winds around the lake with a good view of the lake on the west side of East Twin Lake. Continue around the lake on the north which becomes 120th Street. Peek through the trees for further views of the lake. On the north, as summer dries the lake, sand bars appear where shorebirds like to feed. There is a dike on the east end of the lake for viewing the marsh area and a couple of small ponds that can be good shorebird habitat. The dike is off of 120th Street and has a parking lot.

As you continue east, you can access the nearby area by the branch of the Iowa River and check the ponds or wetlands there, depending on the weather.

Now backtrack on 120th Street and continue to the west to West Twin Lake. A view of the lake and some picnic tables are nestled in the trees at the curve as the lake is approached. Continue west and around to the west end of the lake. Another good view of the lake is on this west side. Grebes and waterfowl use this lake in spring and fall.

The acres of CRP land along B63 in the lakes area are prime Short-eared Owl hunting grounds

**Elrod Sherman Park** to the east of Goodell is a small park with good birding possibilities. It is close to the Upper Iowa River despite its location in the middle of farmland, and this might explain some of the birds found there. Hunting is not allowed in the park and that makes the park a haven for game birds in the fall and winter.

There are two entrances to the park. One is 120th Street south of the park. The other is the east border, which is blacktop R66 and is a north/south road. Both are accessible by vehicle; the south entrance is open year around and the east one until winter snows settle in. The south road takes you into the county maintenance building area and the facilities, which include restrooms and a picnic area. There is parking here and the pit/lake can be scanned for waterfowl. There is a dike to walk, which accesses the north side of the park.

The east entrance is a road winding into the park. It continues about one-half mile and ends up almost on the west side. It is surrounded by pines, cedars, and shrubs. The area hosts many species in the spring and fall including shrikes, warblers, flycatchers, vireos, thrashers, and thrushes. A Great Horned Owl generally is in the area year around as are pheasants. A trail at the end of this park road leads to the west side and more woodland. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings feed here in the winter.

In addition to all of the above sites, there are a few other small woodland areas in Hancock County that may have game birds. There are some other small pit areas that could produce interesting birds. There are several cemeteries in the county with old pines that hold wintering flocks of finches, siskins, and crossbills in invasion years.

Hancock County surprises the birder because it seems to be just a farmland county, but in fact has a variety of habitats to bird in and the potential to produce many species of birds. The truth is that all of the spots listed are my favorites!

# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Spring Business Meeting, 2006

20 May 2006

The IOU spring business meeting was held at Deer Valley Lodge, Ventura Heights, IA. In attendance were Sharon Stilwell, president; John Rutenbeck, vice president; Kay Niyo, acting secretary; Tammy Hertzelt, treasurer; board members Carolyn Fischer, Jim Fuller, Jay Gilliam, and Ric Zarwell; and members of the organization. Vice President Rutenbeck made announcements at 1:05 P.M. He said a Guide to the Birds of Missouri is now available. Dr. Jerry Jackson will have copies of his new edition of *In Search of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker* published in 2006 for purchase and signing. Larry Stone is working on a new book on Gladys Black and asked for remembrances of Gladys.

President Sharon Stilwell called the meeting to order at 1:10 P.M.

**Secretary's Report.** The minutes of the fall business meeting were approved as published in *IBL* 75(4):188–189.

**Treasurer's Report.** Tammy Hertzelt presented a Statement of Financial Position. Assets including a Treasured Certificate of Deposit and checking and savings accounts totaled \$67,427.06 as of 31 Dec 2005. Revenues for 2005 exceeded expenses by \$4,148.24. The treasurer's report was accepted. The full financial report is published in this issue of *IBL*.

**Registrar's Report.** Registrar Doug Hunt said the paid membership is 412 with 39 new members in 2006. Fifty-five members have not renewed and will be called by him and others.

**Publications Committee Report.** Chair Ann Johnson said Neil Bernstein resigned from the committee and the committee will be presenting a nominee to the board for approval. She has integrated data collection for the Important Bird Areas and the IOU; membership information is now on line for members only. Members can print receipts for donations, etc. She said we only had one complaint of postal mishandling of a journal mailed by our new mailing house in Boulder. The membership expiration date is on the label as a reminder. She and others are investigating scanning all of the older IBLs to have available to and searchable by the public except for the most current two years, which will be available to members only.

**Records Committee Report.** Secretary Ann Johnson reported the committee has completed 2005 records and is working on 2006 records. The committee received 169 on-line documentations with 141 separate documentations reviewed by the committee. Three new species were added to the IA list in 2005 and Brambling has been added in 2006. Stephen J. Dinsmore (2011) replaced Mike Overton on the committee and Mike Overton (2007) is filling the remainder of James J. Dinsmore's term.

**Membership Committee Report.** Chair Karen Disbrow will propose new committee members to the board. She said the supply of T-shirts is low and they are considering purchasing polo shirts. They are trying to get IOU brochures into local bird seed stores and local birding clubs. She needs contacts for that process and any other ideas to increase membership.

**Projects Committee Report.** Chair Jay Gilliam said the committee met in January and set up procedures to be presented to the board. They will accept project proposals this fall and provide funding in the spring.

**Trip Committee Report.** Acting Chair Bill Scheible said the AZ trip is filled, the SW IA trip has at least five participants, and the WI trip led by Jim Scheib had six participants. The committee will provide two IA trips and one out-of-state trip/year. They would like to provide birding trips to Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation properties this year also. He encouraged the membership to participate. Please send ideas to Bill Scheible.

**Old Business.** None.

## **New Business**

**Nominating Committee Report.** Frances Moore reported for the committee composed of himself, Rita Goranson, and Tom Johnson. Bob Cecil was nominated for secretary and Tammy Hertzell, treasurer. Board member nominees were John Bissell, Carolyn Fischer, and Tim Humpal. President Stilwell asked for other nomination; there were none, so she declared the nominees elected.

**Photo Contest.** President Stilwell announced Mark Brown as winner of 1st and 2nd place, Dick Stilwell, 3rd place, and honorable mention was awarded to Reid Allen and Mark Brown. The judges were Aaron Brees, Jay Gilliam, and Ty Smedes.

**Fall and Spring Meetings.** John Rutenbeck said the fall 2006 IOU meeting will be held at Hotel Manning, Keosauqua on 8–10 September, and Dr. James Rising, oriole and sparrow expert, will be the banquet speaker. The spring 2007 meeting is tentatively planned for the Loess Hills on 18–20 May 2007.

**Announcements.** Mark Proescholdt announced that Jim and Pat Dinsmore sold their home and are moving to Florida and will be greatly missed by all IOU members. He thanked Jim for his long service to IOU.

Ric Zarwell said there are free NatureScape newspapers on the table and that contributions are being collected for Robert Ridgeley's Jocotoco Birdathon with proceeds to go to the Jocotoco Foundation in Ecuador.

**Adjournment.** Judy Garton moved to adjourn at 1:45 P.M. and Frances Moore seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Kayleen A. Niyo, acting secretary for Robert I. Cecil, secretary

# Board Meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union

20 May 2006

The IOU board meeting was held at Deer Valley Lodge, Ventura Heights, IA. President Sharon Stilwell called the meeting to order at 4 P.M. In attendance were Sharon Stilwell, president; John Rutenbeck, vice president; Kay Niyo, acting secretary; Tammy Hertzell, treasurer; board members Carolyn Fischer, Jim Fuller, Jay Gilliam, Ric Zarwell and newly elected board members John Bissell and Tim Humpal.

**Secretary's Report.** The minutes of the fall board meeting were approved as published in *IBL* 75(4):189–194.

**Treasurer's Report.** Tammy Hertzell presented a Statement of Financial Position. Assets including a Treasured Certificate of Deposit and checking and savings accounts totaled \$67,427.06 as of 31 Dec 2005. Revenues for 2005 exceeded expenses by \$4,148.24. Year-to-date surplus as of 19 May 2006 is \$6,442.79.

A \$300 matching donation was given by Cargill in honor of Jon Swanson. A \$750 matching donation from Meredith (\$250 meeting expenses and \$500 general fund) was provided in honor of Sharon Stilwell and Dick Stilwell.

IOU realized a profit from 2005 meetings. Tammy paid the three-year treasurer's bond last year. She will move Paypal monies from savings to checking as needed. There is also excess money in the savings account that the board will need to decide what to do with. She provided copies of the approved 2006 budget to board members. She closed the Endowment Funds at the end of last year. She will create a reserve fund so prepaid dues are recognized in the proper year. The treasurer's report was accepted. The full financial report is published in this issue of *IBL*.

**Registrar's Report.** Doug Hunt suggested that *IBL* editor, Kay Niyo, notify him two weeks before needing mailing labels so he can enter address changes. That will save postage. Non-renewing members get the first two issues before they are dropped from membership list. The board discussed the high postal costs of two international memberships. It was suggested that one in England might take a PDF in lieu of a paper copy. Ric Zarwell will check with her. The library in Germany would need a paper copy. Ric Zarwell moved to increase international memberships to \$35/year to cover mailing cost. Carolyn Fischer seconded the motion. Motion carried. Doug said 55 current members have not renewed so he is going to send names to the board members to call encouraging renewals.

**Membership Committee Report.** Chair Karen Disbrow said the committee has four new members: Barb Edson, Clyde Edson, Pam Akers, and Danny Akers. Ric Zarwell moved to approve the new members and John Rutenbeck seconded. Motion carried. Karen asked about the possibility of having a booth at the state fair, but there would not be enough people to staff it for 10 days. Karen said the committee may purchase some polo shirts for sale. Kay Niyo brought about 100 covers of *IBL* 76(1) provided at no cost by the printer

to use for posters. Karen said she will send some to the Nehers, host family to the Green Violet-ear. Kay is mailing some covers to Matt Wetrich, photographer of the Green Violet-ear.

**Projects Committee Report.** Chair Jay Gilliam asked about the \$500 limit previously voted by the board as being a cap on project spending unless the committee receives membership approval. Board opinion was that now that there is a Projects Committee, it can decide how much to spend for approved projects. Jay said they will need to change their bylaws to reflect that. Jay provided the new committee procedures to the board. He said Tom Johnson will become chair on June 1. Procedures state that the project recipient must provide a final report of use of the IOU money to be published in the newsletter or IBL.

**Publications Committee Report.** Ann Johnson announced that Bill Scheible agreed to become a member of the committee to replace Neil Bernstein who resigned. Ric Zarwell moved and Jay Gilliam seconded to accept Bill as a committee member. Motion carried.

**Insurance.** Ann Johnson said she has rented two vehicles for the IOU AZ trip and added \$500 deductible insurance/vehicle. The deductible can be a liability for IOU if an accident occurs. She suggested that trip registration fees in excess of trip costs be placed into a designated trip fund to cover such potential trip liability costs. Tammy Hertzell suggested that IOU should build that risk into trip cost if vehicles are rented.

**Library/Historical Committee Report.** Chair Hank Zaletel will deposit historical documents from Sharon Stilwell into the ISU IOU archives. Major documents such as Articles of Incorporation will be deposited in the IOU lock box, for which Tammy Hertzell and Sharon Stilwell have keys. Some major documents have been scanned and placed on the web site for easy access.

**Publication Inventory.** Sharon Stilwell has sorted the IBL inventory and said there are quite a few copies of some of the journals. The Publication Committee has discussed the issue and agreed that we need to try to better estimate a likely excess inventory to print for each issue. Sharon said she has two sets of most of the issues in short supply that can be photocopied if needed. Tom Kent had saved a third set in 5-year bundles. Hank Zaletel is checking on the cost of having a commercial scanner scan all the older journals (for which there are no PDFs) for the web site. Kay Niyo explained the rationale of indexing the journal each year in the final issue rather than every five years as has been done in the past. The Publications Committee decided to do that and Jim Dinsmore has agreed to continue indexing the journals.

**Old Business.** Business handled by e-mail by the board between board meetings includes the following items. A request from Doug Harr to support principals of Teaming with Wildlife was approved by acclamation. A request from the Records Committee to approve Mike Overton was approved by acclamation. A request by Kim Risen, a publisher, to obtain the IOU electronic mailing list was declined (with two votes in favor and the rest opposed). The board wished Mr. Risen well and suggested he post to the Iowa Bird list-serv an announcement about his new publication and his proposed offer of free intro-



ductory copies. It was also suggested that he could offer introductory copies at our spring meeting.

**New Business.** Tom Johnson, Francis Moore, and Mark Proescholdt agreed to serve on the 2007 Nominating Committee. Jay moved to approve the committee and Ric Zarwell seconded. Motion carried.

**Board and Budget Meeting Date.** Sharon announced that due to high gas prices, it will be advisable to have the board and budget meeting during the fall IOU meeting. A deadline for committee proposals needs to be set and Tammy Hertzell will remind chairs.

**Obituaries in Newsletter or IBL.** Tammy Hertzell suggested the membership be informed that Beth Proescholdt's family has requested bequests be sent to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

Sharon Stilwell said Hank Zaletel offered to write obituaries. Past President Dick Tetrault assigned Hank to look up past donations. Hank provided a proposal containing five points: (1) send a form letter to donors, (2) make list of uses for donations, (3) place donation acknowledgement in IOU News, (4) publish article in IOU News reminding members to donate to IOU, and (5) the registrar publish bequests on web site.

Tammy Hertzell moved that IOU provide the family's information on where to send memorials and Carolyn Fischer seconded. Motion carried.

There was no resolution of the issue of where obituaries should be published.

**Business Procedures between Meetings.** Sharon Stilwell said between-meeting board e-mail business should include only important items. Ann Johnson will provide a web page for discussion and voting similar to the Records Committee procedures. Board members should let the president know if they are going to be out of town for an extended period. Bob Cecil had suggested that there be a motion and a second prior to voting and that there be a limited time for discussion and a voting form.

**Portable Sound System.** Doug Hunt asked about the advisability of purchasing a portable sound system for meetings; one was needed and unavailable for this meeting. Tammy Hertzell will check on cost.

**Adjournment.** John Rutenbeck moved to adjourn at 5:30 P.M. and Jim Fuller seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Kayleen A. Niyo, acting secretary for Robert I. Cecil, secretary



TREASURER'S REPORT — TAMMY M. HERTZEL

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE PERIODS ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2004 AND 2005

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Current Assets at 31 December 2004		
Checking	6,017.83	
Savings	5,087.67	
CD 1997	10,326.61	
CD 8037	20,793.72	
CD 8011	21,052.99	
Total Current Assets at 31 December 2004		63,278.82
Y-T-D 2005 Net Surplus/Deficit		4,148.24
Current Assets at 31 December 2005		
Checking	2,647.08	
Savings	11,395.81	
CD 1997	—	
CD 8037	—	
CD 8011	—	
Treasured CD	53,384.17	
Total Current Assets at 31 December 2005		67,427.06

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STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES, AND BUDGETS FOR THE YEARS  
ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2004 AND 2005

Revenues	2004 Revenues	2005 Approved Budget (1/9/05)	2005 Revenues
Dues:			
Fledgling (\$12), Students, New Members	12.00		12.00
Goldfinch (\$20), Regular Membership	4,110.00		3,180.00
Bluebird (\$35)	4,200.00		3,500.00
Baltimore Oriole (\$50)	1,750.00		1,600.00
Great Egret (\$75)	525.00		300.00
Osprey (\$100)	1,900.00		1,675.00
Bald Eagle (\$250)			250.00
Peregrine Falcon (\$500)			
Institutional	780.00		640.00
Life	200.00		
Other			
Total Dues	13,477.00	12,000.00	11,157.00
Advertising			115.00
Amortize Life Memberships (56)			
Donations:			
Specified, Publications	1,329.00	1,100.00	1,080.00
Specified, Communications			5.00
Specified, Listserv			
Unspecified	2,114.00	100.00	1,875.00
Memorials	110.00		
Total Donations	3,553.00	1,200.00	2,960.00
Meeting Income	7,733.54		12,931.28
Bird Trip Income	1,200.00		1,300.00
Sales	1,101.62	1,500.00	1,023.97
Merchandise, T-shirts, Denim shirts, Hats, Pins, Patches, Misc.			
Sales, Designated to Publications	244.33		616.39
Back Issues	7.00		39.68
Total Sales, Designated to Publications	251.33	—	656.07
Interest Income:			
Checking/Savings	22.39		32.48
Cert of Deposit 1997	118.60		435.81
Cert of Deposit 8037	159.18		246.90
Cert of Deposit 8011	230.63		120.88
Treasured CD			407.26
Total Interest Income	530.80	600.00	1,243.33
Auctions, Designated to Publications	693.00	300.00	638.00
Special Revenue Generators			
Other	(18.54)		
Total Revenues	28,521.75	15,600.00	32,024.65

Expenses	2004 Expenses	2005 Budget Requests	2005 Expenses
Iowa Bird Line			
Standing Committees:			
Publications:			
Newsletter	2,447.60		2,465.61
IBL	9,143.61		11,119.22
Internet Service	546.11		589.70
Total Publications	12,137.32	11,200.00	14,174.53
Membership	64.42	500.00	497.77
Records	26.45	75.00	102.55
Library/Historical		25.00	
Total Standing Committees	12,228.19	11,800.00	14,774.85
Ad Hoc Committees:			
Conservation/Projects		50.00	
Trips, see above			
Total Ad Hoc Committees	—	50.00	—
Meeting Expenses	10,578.11	1,200.00	9,902.21
Bird Trip Expenses	924.50	250.00	810.04
Sales	957.01		
Merchandise, T-shirts, Denim shirts, Hats, Pins, Patches, Misc.		600.00	735.63
Checklists		250.00	245.00
Outside Projects/Donations	275.50		
Officers			
President		50.00	
Vice President		50.00	
Treasurer	114.84	50.00	87.69
Secretary		50.00	
Registrar/Membership	661.77	600.00	424.13
Total Officers	776.61	800.00	511.82
Bank and PayPal Fees	214.87	200.00	284.41
Insurance			
Liability	350.00	350.00	350.00
Bonding Treasurer		100.00	225.00
Total Insurance	350.00	450.00	575.00
Auctions/Special Revenue Generators			
Others	3.20		37.45
Conservation, Education, General Fund			
Total Expenses	26,307.99	15,600.00	27,876.41
Net Surplus/Deficit	2,213.76	—	4,148.24

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION, 31 DECEMBER 2005

	At 31 December 2004	2005 Budget	2005 Incr (Decr)	At 31 December 2005
Current Assets				
Checking	6,017.83			2,647.08
Savings	5,087.67			11,395.81
CD 1997	10,326.61			—
CD 8037	20,793.72			—
CD 8011	21,052.99			—
CD – Treasured CD				53,384.17
Total Current Assets	63,278.82			67,427.06
Fund Balances				—
Bird-a-thon Fund	1,512.05		(1,512.05)	—
Book Royalties Fund	2,865.34		(2,865.34)	—
Endowment Fund	4,941.39		(4,941.39)	—
Project Fund	390.71		(390.71)	—
Total Endowment Funds	9,709.49	—	(9,709.49)	—
Publications Fund	6,422.19	11,200.00	(14,174.53)	3,447.66
Life Membership Fund	8,492.50		3,821.39	12,313.89
Outside Projects Fund	2,026.50		4,768.10	6,794.60
Total Specific Funds	16,941.19	11,200.00	(5,585.04)	22,556.15
Memorials	15,110.00			15,110.00
General Operating Fund	21,518.14	(11,200.00)	19,442.77	29,760.91
Total Fund Balance	63,278.82		4,148.24	67,427.06

## Fifty Years Ago in Iowa Bird Life

*James J. Dinsmore*

The March 1956 issue centers on articles describing the 1955 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and the upcoming spring meeting in Decorah. The Christmas Bird Count was the most successful in Iowa to date with 90 species being found on 21 counts. By far the highest count was at Davenport where 72 species were found; Des Moines was second with 47. The Davenport count was bolstered by 11 species of waterfowl; the other 20 counts found a total of only 10 waterfowl species and 13 found none. Waterfowl were just starting to become an important part of Iowa CBCs. Interestingly, no Canada Geese were reported, a dramatic difference from the present!

Arthur Palas of Postville provided readers with an enticing description of some of the natural areas around Decorah where the spring meeting was to be held. In particular, he

pointed out the uniqueness of northeastern Iowa and the birds that could be found there.

Long-time Sioux City birder William Youngworth wrote about some of his experiences with birds while still a teenager. Of most interest was the summer he spent working on a homestead in the mountains of Wyoming where he was able to become familiar with a number of western species.

Among the shorter notes, one described a Virginia Rail that apparently overwintered at Camp Dodge near Des Moines. To my knowledge no one has made a similar observation since then.

646 Mallory Hill Drive, The Villages, FL 32162 (oldcoot@iastate.edu)

## **Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life***

*James J. Dinsmore*

Earnest Steffen's excellent line drawings add greatly to his article on the warblers of Cedar Rapids in the June issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. Steffen describes some of his favorite areas for finding warblers in and near Cedar Rapids and laments the loss of wooded and shrubby areas that they typically occupy. Many of his comments on habitat loss are still applicable today.

Loras College Professor Emmett Polder of Dubuque describes several unusual winter residents he found in northeastern Iowa including a Wilson's Snipe that survived until at least mid-February near Dyersville. In another article, Pete Petersen analyzed the food habits of the Long-eared Owl, as determined from pellets collected in Pine Hill Cemetery in Davenport. As is typical, several species of mice made up most of the diet.

James Sieh of the Iowa Conservation Commission describes a massive migration of waterfowl through northwestern Iowa on 1–2 November 1955. On 2 November, he saw many flocks of Mallards and other ducks leaving Spirit Lake and flying south across the narrow isthmus separating that lake from East Okoboji and then continuing south. Such massive migrations occur every few years in Iowa.

The spring 1956 meeting in Decorah was apparently very successful. Attendance totaled 86, and the Sunday field trips found a very respectable total of 145 species with 21 more found on Saturday.

646 Mallory Hill Drive, The Villages, FL 32162 (oldcoot@iastate.edu)

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional \$20, Goldfinch \$20, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Manage your membership on-line at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)> or send new subscriptions and memberships, back issue requests, or address changes to Douglas Hunt, 1201 High Ave., West, Oskaloosa, IA 52577 ([iou@mahaska.org](mailto:iou@mahaska.org)). Renewals may be sent to the IOU Treasurer (see inside front cover).

**INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS:** Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent in Word or WordPerfect to the editor. Research manuscripts will be sent for peer review. Submission of material should be by e-mail attachment or CD/DVD; alternatively, by mail, typed, or handwritten.

**Photos and graphics:** Submit photos and slides preferably as TIFF (\*.tif) images or as high resolution JPEG (\*.jpg) images in e-mail attachment or on CD/DVD.

Send all materials other than seasonal field reports to Kayleen A. Niyo at [Kay@KayNiyo.com](mailto:Kay@KayNiyo.com) or by mail to 25100 Sunset Lane, Evergreen, CO 80439. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue (Vol. 1), April 1 for spring issue (2), July 1 for summer issue (3), October 1 for fall issue (4)**. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

**IOU NEWS:** Paul Hertzel, Editor, 1432 East State Street, Mason City, IA 50401 ([phertzel@rconnect.com](mailto:phertzel@rconnect.com))

**IOU WEB SITE:** <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>, Ann Johnson, Webmaster

**IOWA RBA:** Danny Akers ([warbler\\_1231@hotmail.com](mailto:warbler_1231@hotmail.com))

**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:** Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 4 South Ridge Ct., Coralville, IA 52241 ([cjcaster@earthlink.net](mailto:cjcaster@earthlink.net)).

**BIRD SIGHTINGS:** Subscribe at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>

**ADDRESS CHANGES:** Update your on-line profile at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)> or send address changes to Registrar Douglas Hunt, 1201 High Ave., West, Oskaloosa, IA 52577 ([iou@mahaska.org](mailto:iou@mahaska.org)).

**UPCOMING MEETING OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:** Fall 2006: 8–10 September, Hotel Manning, Keosauqua

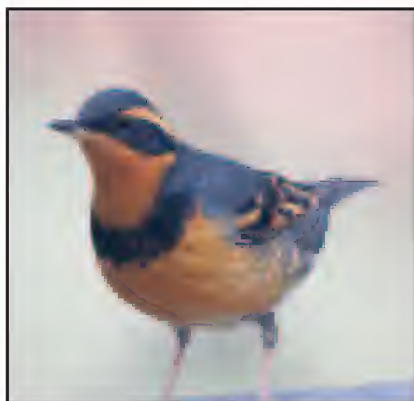
**FRONT COVER:** Immature female Snowy Owl seen along a gravel road, *Union*, while doing the CBC, 24 December 2005. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA. See field reports and article by Paul Hertzel on the Snowy Owl winter invasion.

**BACK COVER:** Varied Thrush, West Des Moines, *Polk*, 29 December 2005. Photograph by Dick Stilwell, West Des Moines, IA.

DESIGN: Lynn Ekblad, Ames, IA

GRAPHICS: Richard Beachler, Boone, IA





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